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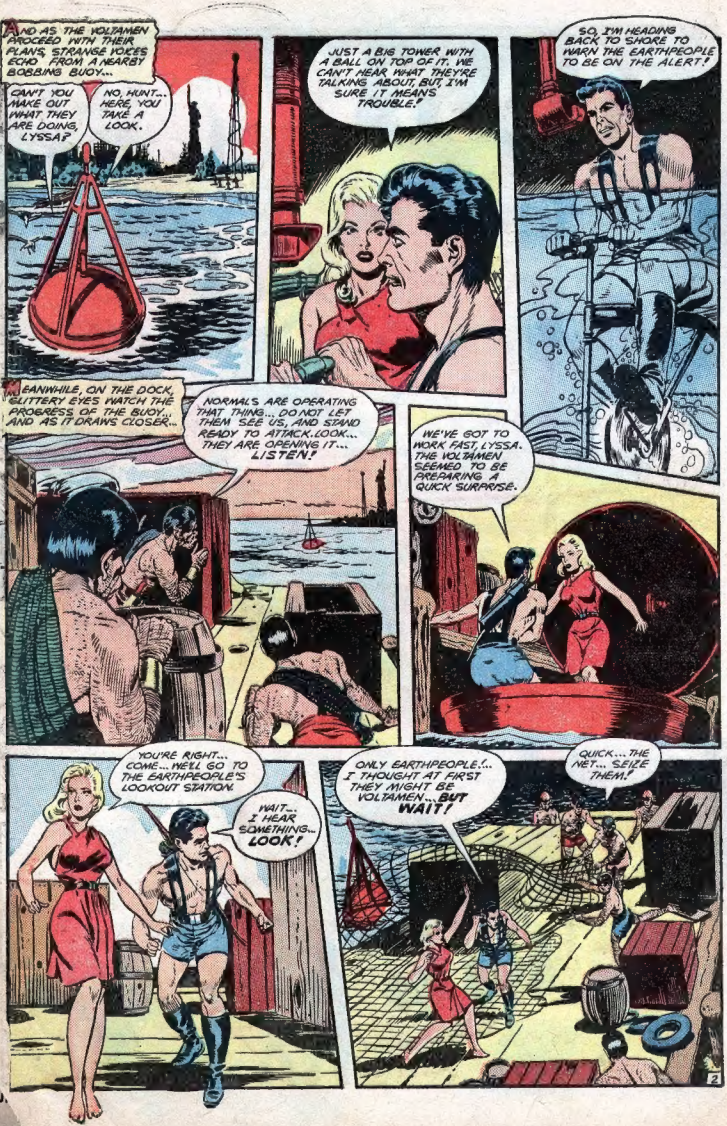
PLANET COMICS, No. 60, May, 1949. Published every other month by Love Romances Pub. Co., Inc., 670 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N. Y. T. C. Scott, Pres. J. F. Byrne, Mgr. Editor. Re-entered as second-class matter July 8, 1940 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Contents copyrighted, 1949, by Love Romances Pub. Co., Inc. Yearly subscription in U. S. $.60; Foreign $.80. Single copies 10¢ in U. S. For advertising rates: Advertising Director, Fiction House, Inc., 670 Fifth Avenue, New York 19, N. Y. Printed in U. S. A.

ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS (No. 61, JULY) ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSSTAND MAY 10th.

The LOST WORLD
by THORNECLIFF HARRICK
IT WAS IN 1975 A.D. WHEN THE PLANET VOLTA LOOSED ITS WRATH AND HURLED ITS DIABOLICAL FORCES AGAINST AN UNSUSPECTING AND DEFENSELESS EARTH, DESTROYING ITS CIVILIZATION AND CITIES, SLAUGHTERING ITS HELPLESS PEOPLE. YET SOME SURVIVED, AND, LED BY HUNT BOWMAN AND LYTESA, FOUGHT ON... PREFERRING DEATH TO SLAVERY. CERTAINLY, THERE WAS NO PLACE FOR DISCRIMINATION IN THAT TINY BAND... ALL WHO RESISTED THE VOLTAMEN WERE BROTHERS, AND MUST STAND UNITED, FOR EVEN NOW ON BEDLOE'S ISLAND, THE VOLTAMEN WERE PREPARING A NEWER AND MORE HORRIBLE WEAPON TO ANNIHILATE THEM ALL...
GEORGE EVANS
AT LAST POWER CONTROL TOWER COMPLETED IS. EARTH SLAVES THE STAYS TIGHTENED HAVE!
YES, COMRADE, THAT THEY NOW DO. READY FOR THE TEST WE ARE.
GOOD... THEN PILOTS TO FLYING DISCHARGES ORDER. I, IN BEAM BALL, THE OPERATION SUPERVISE WILL.


AND AS THE VOLTAMEN PROCEED WITH THEIR PLANS, STRANGE VOICES ECHO FROM A NEARBY BOBBING BUOY...
CAN'T YOU MAKE OUT WHAT THEY ARE DOING, LYSSA?
NO, HUNT... HERE, YOU TAKE A LOOK.
...JUST A BIG TOWER WITH A BALL ON TOP OF IT. WE CAN'T HEAR WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT, I'M SURE IT MEANS TROUBLE!
SO, I'M HEADING BACK TO SHORE TO WARN THE EARTHPEOPLE TO BE ON THE ALERT!
MEANWHILE, ON THE DOCK, GLITTERY EYES WATCH THE PROGRESS OF THE BUOY... AND AS IT DRAWS CLOSER...
NORMALS ARE OPERATING THAT THING... DO NOT LET THEM SEE US, AND STAND READY TO ATTACK. LOOK... THEY ARE OPENING IT... LISTEN!
WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST, LYSSA. THE VOLTAMEN SEEMED TO BE PREPARING A QUICK SURPRISE.
YOU'RE RIGHT... COME... WE'LL GO TO THE EARTHPEOPLE'S LOOKOUT STATION.
WAIT... I HEAR SOMETHING... LOOK!
ONLY EARTHPEOPLE!... I THOUGHT AT FIRST THEY MIGHT BE VOLTAMEN... BUT WAIT!
QUICK... THE NET... SEIZE THEM!
2

MEANWHILE, IN AN OLD FACTORY YARD UPTOWN, BORDERING THE HUDSON RIVER, STRANGE AND HURRIED PREPARATIONS ARE UNDER WAY...
GOOD... THE MEN ARE BRINGING OUT THE SPACER. AS SOON AS THE ROCKETS ARE CHECKED AND PROVISIONS LOADED, WE TAKE OFF.
I HAVE DECIDED TO HEAD FOR PLANETOID S-9. IT WILL BE AN EXCELLENT SPOT FOR US TO COLONIZE.
YES, HELENE, AND WE MUST HURRY. THE OTHERS ARE STORMING THE GATE. YOU CAN SEE THEM IN THE VIDEO.
I SEE... BUT THERE IS NO PLACE FOR THEM ABOARD. I HAVE SELECTED OUR COMPANY CAREFULLY.
AND I WAS THE ONE WHO THOUGHT OF THE IDEA OF RECONDITIONING THE OLD VOLTA SPACER AND FLEEING FROM THIS STRICKEN PLANET. PILOT, HAVE YOU CHECKED THE SHIP'S CONTROLS?
YES, HELENE. WE CAN LEAVE AS SOON AS THE SHIP IS LOADED.
WHILE, AT THE BATTERY, HUNT AND LYSSA FIND THEMSELVES IN DANGER.
STOP THIS! CAN'T YOU SEE, WE'RE EARTHPEOPLE?
I AM HUNT BOWMAN, THE LEADER OF OUR RESISTANCE. WE MUST ALL UNITE AGAINST THE VOLTAMEN. NOW RELEASE US AT ONCE!
ONCE WE WERE NORMALS LIKE YOU, UNTIL THE VOLTA RAYS CHANGED US.
AND STILL WE FOUGHT BESIDE YOU. BUT NOW, WHEN SOME OF YOU PLAN TO ESCAPE TO ANOTHER PLANET, YOU EXCLUDE US. CALL US PRIMITIVES!
ESCAPE? I DON'T UNDERSTAND... OHMMM!
3

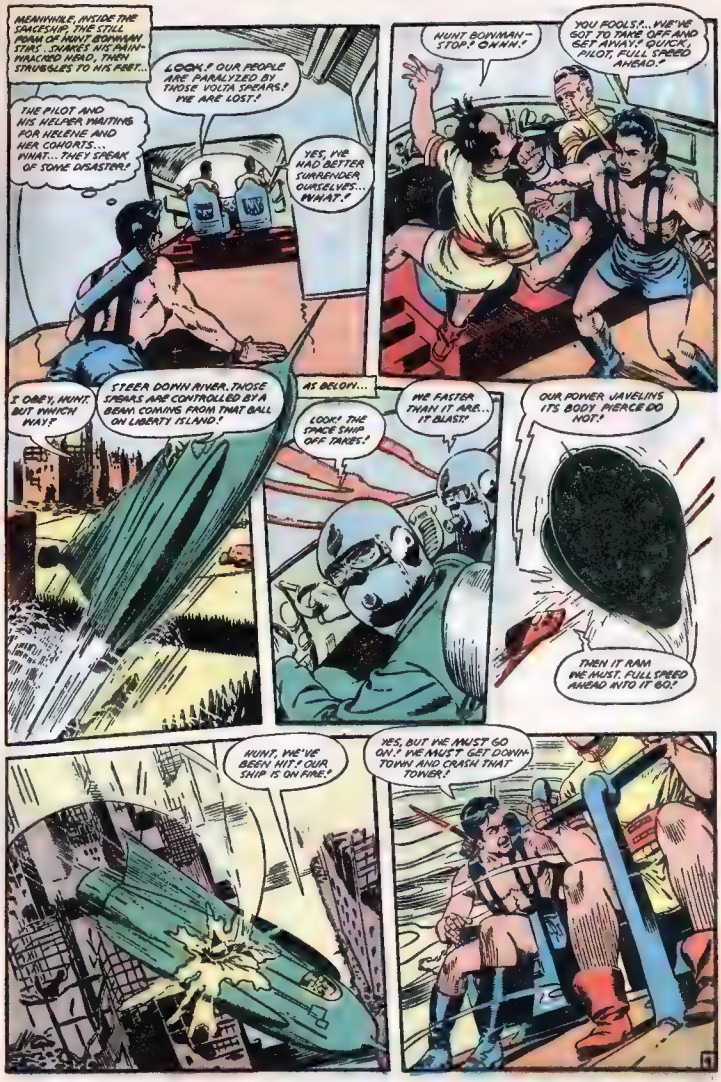
WHILE ON BEDLOE'S ISLAND, WITHIN THE SHADOW OF THE STATUE OF LIBERTY, THE VOLTAMEN PREPARE TO TEST THEIR LATEST INFERNAL MACHINES.
PILOTS DON HELMETS AND PLACES IN FLYING DISCHARGERS TAKE. OPERATORS IN BEAM BALL READY FOR TEST ARE.
AND SECONDS LATER, STREAKS OF UNLEASHED ENERGY BLAZE FROM THE TOWER, CHARGING THE TINY PARKED PLANES.
SIGNAL FOR RELEASE GIVEN HAS BEEN.
YES, WE IN THIS TEST, THE ENTIRE CITY COVER WILL. COME... WE NOW GO!
AS, ACROSS THE BAY, THE ENRAGED PRIMITIVES MARCH HUNT AND LYSSA TOWARD AN ANCIENT RIVER BOAT...
YOU WILL BE CHAINED ON THE BOAT RAILING WITH THE OTHER PRISONERS ABOARD OUR CRAFT.. COME.!
WHY - WHY?... WE HAVE NOT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST YOU.
BUT SOME NORMALS HAVE SO YOU WILL BE HOSTAGES. WE WILL SAIL UP AND HAIL HELENE AND HER CREW... DEMAND THEY INCLUDE SOME OF US IN THEIR FLIGHT!
AND IF THEY REFUSE... BUT ENOUGH... WE SAIL AT ONCE.
HE'S GONE, HUNT.! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
ESCAPE... IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THEM. BUT THESE PRIMITIVES ARE RIGHT. THEY FOUGHT WITH US AND IT'S NOT FAIR OF HELENE TO REFUSE TO TAKE SOME OF THEM ON THE FLIGHT!

THIS RAILING IS OLD AND ROTTEN, LYSSA. I'M GOING TO TRY TO BREAK IT... HERE GOES!
LOOK...BOWMAN HAS BROKEN LOOSE. SEIZE HIM!
I'M FREE, LYSSA...BLOCK THEM. I'LL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO SAVE YOU AND THE OTHERS... GOODBYE!
GOOD LUCK, HUNT. GO QUICKLY! THERE, I'VE TRIPPED THEM!
I MADE IT. NOW I'VE GOT TO BEAT THE BOAT UP TO HELENE'S STOCKADE AND CONVINCE HER THESE PRIMITIVES ARE RIGHT!
IF I LOSE, AND HELENE TAKES OFF WITHOUT INCLUDING SOME OF THEM, LYSSA AND THE OTHER PRISONERS ARE DOOMED!
MEANWHILE, AT THE STOCKADE...
LISTEN, HELENE, THE CLAMOR GROWS. THEY WILL BREAK DOWN THE GATE. LOOK AT THEM IN THE PORTABLE VIDEO.
OUR CHILDEN DESERVE TO GO WITH YOU!
OPEN THE DOOR OR WE WILL BREAK IT DOWN!
THE SPACER IS ALMOST ALL LOADED AND READY TO TAKE OFF. I WILL TALK TO THESE FOOLS BEFORE THEY BREAK IN AND SPOIL EVERYTHING!
5

AS OUTSIDE...
WHAT RIGHT HAVE THESE MEN TO SELECT WHO LEAVES?
NONE! COME, WE WILL BREAK DOWN THE GATE!
WAIT! SOMEONE ENTERS THE GUARD TOWER...IT IS HELENE... SHE SIGNALS FOR QUIET... LET HER TALK!
FRIENDS...THERE IS BUT ROOM FOR A FEW OF US INSIDE THE SPACER, AND THE TRIP IS DANGEROUS...
BUT WE WILL FIND A PLANET SUITABLE FOR ESTABLISHING A COLONY, AND THEN WILL SEND THE SHIP BACK TO TAKE MORE OF YOU.
AH...THEY DO NOT BELIEVE AND ARE PREPARING TO RUSH THE GATE. I WILL FIX THEM!
YOU LIE! YOU ARE DESERTING US! FOLLOW ME, MEN!
SHE LEAVES US HERE TO FIGHT THE VOLTAMEN WHILE SHE FLEES... OWW!
AH...THAT ELECTRIC SHOCK FROM THE WIRED GATE WILL TEACH THEM NOT TO TRY TO DICTATE TO HELENA - WHAT!

HUNT BOWMAN! YOU SHOT THAT ARROW!?
YES! YOU'RE WRONG, HELENE, IN DISCRIMINATING AGAINST THE PRIMITIVES BY NOT INCLUDING THEM IN YOUR VENTURE!
THEY'RE AS INTELLIGENT AND LOYAL AS THE REST OF US..EVEN NOW THEY COME IN THAT BOAT LOADED WITH PRISONERS, AND SWEAR THEY WILL KILL THEM ALL UNLESS YOU TAKE SOME OF THEM!
IF THERE WERE ROOM, FIRST I WOULD TAKE THOSE NORMALS CLAMORING OUTSIDE THE GATE. GUARDS! SEIZE HIM!
QUICK! KNOCK HIM OUT AND PUT HIM IN THE SHIP. HE'LL BE A WELCOME ADDITION TO OUR PARTY.
GOOD..GET THE SPACER READY TO TAKE OFF, PILOT, WHILE I TEACH THOSE PRIMITIVES A LESSON. I WILL SHELL THEIR SHIP.
MEANWHILE..ON THE APPROACHING RIVER BOAT...
AHOY, ON SHORE! WE DEMAND A CONFERENCE!
LOOK! THEY HAVE MEN MANNING THEIR CANNON! THEY'RE GOING TO OPEN FIRE ON US!
JUMP! THEY'LL SINK US!
UNLOCK OUR CHAINS! GIVE US A CHANCE TO LIVE! PLEASE GIVE US A CHANCE!

AS SUDDENLY FROM ABOVE, A VOLTA FLYING DISCHARGER SWEEPS ACROSS THE HORIZON..
AND THEY ONE OF OUR OLD SPACEMEN READY FOR LAUNCHING HAVE.' NOTIFY OUR BALL BEAM, OUR POWER TO INTENSIFY.!
NO...EARTHPEOPLE THERE IN FIGHT ARE... SOME IN STOCKADE AT THAT SHIP SHOOT.'
ATTENTION! THIS DISCHARGER NUMBER TWELVE IS. ME A GROUP OF EARTHPEOPLE SIGHTED HAVE. US GIVE MAXIMUM POWER!
THEY HEARD WAVE, AND IT DO WILL. WE NOW ATTACK WILL!
AS BELOW IN THE STOCKADE...
THERE...THIS WILL SHOW'M THAT WE MEAN BUSINESS! WHAT.!
LOOK, HELENE! A VOLTASHIP'S DIVING AT US.!
PARALYZER JAVELINS LOOSED ARE! THIS A GOOD TEST FOR OUR NEW BEAM TOWER IS.! LOOK!
AS BELOW...
RUN TO THE SPACESHIP.! THE VOLTANIEN ARE ATTACKING.! OHHH.!
THEN A SUDDEN SILENCE AS THE SHRIEKS ARE STILLED AND THE FROULD-BE VOYAGERS STAND AS FROZEN STATUES...
...HELD POWERLESS BY THE SPARKLING SPEARS...AT THE MERCY OF THE APPROACHING VOLTAN HORDE...


MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE SPACESHIP, THE STILL FORM OF HUNT BOWMAN STIRS. SHAKES HIS PAIN-RACKED HEAD, THEN STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET...
LOOK! OUR PEOPLE ARE PARALYZED BY THOSE VOLTA SPEARS! WE ARE LOST!
THE PILOT AND HIS HELPER WAITING FOR HELENE AND HER COHORTS... WHAT... THEY SPEAK OF SOME DISASTER?
YES, WE HAD BETTER SURRENDER OURSELVES... WHAT?
HUNT BOWMAN - STOP! OHHH!
YOU FOOLS!... WE'VE GOT TO TAKE OFF AND GET AWAY! QUICK, PILOT, FULL SPEED AHEAD!
I OBEY, HUNT, BUT WHICH WAY?
STEER DOWN RIVER. THOSE SPEARS ARE CONTROLLED BY A BEAM COMING FROM THAT BALL ON LIBERTY ISLAND!
AS BELOW...
LOOK! THE SPACE SHIP OFF TAKES!
WE FASTER THAN IT ARE... IT BLAST!
OUR POWER JAVELINS ITS BODY PIERCE DO NOT!
THEN IT RAM WE MUST, FULL SPEED AHEAD INTO IT GO!
HUNT, WE'VE BEEN HIT! OUR SHIP IS ON FIRE!
YES, BUT WE MUST GO ON! WE MUST GET DOWN TOWN AND CRASH THAT TOWER!

AND SECONDS LATER, INSIDE THE BALL BEAM..
«OOF, COMRADE! THAT FLAMING SHIP AT US COMING IS!»
IT US HIT WILL! WE LOST ARE!
QUICK. I'VE FASTENED A CHUTE ON YOUR BACK. GRAB YOUR HELPER AND JUMP!
THEY'RE SAFE AND THIS THING WILL CRASH THAT BALL IN ANOTHER SECOND. I'M OFF!
INSTANTLY.
GOOD.. WE DID IT! THAT'LL DESTROY THE HYPNOTIC RAY WHICH HAS CAPTURED THE OTHERS!
AND SOON.
THANK HEAVENS, LYSSA, YOU ESCAPED FROM THE BOAT!
YES, THE PRIMITIVES UNLOCKED OUR FETTERS AND SAVED US. AND SEE, HELENE SPEAKS TO THEM.
FRIENDS, I WAS WRONG TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR HAIRY BODIES. WE WILL UNITE UNDER HUNT BOWMAN.
GOOD, HELENE. AND IF WE EVER GET ANOTHER SPACESHIP, WE WILL SEND OUR CHARGES TO SAFETY.
OH, HUNT, ISN'T IT GOOD TO KNOW WE ARE ALL UNITED AND WILL FACE THE VOLTA THREAT TOGETHER?
YES, LYSSA. AND I'M ALSO GLAD WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT BEAM BALL AND THOSE FLYING DISCHARGES ANY MORE!

LOST WORLD, IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

Futura

BY JOHN DOUGLAS

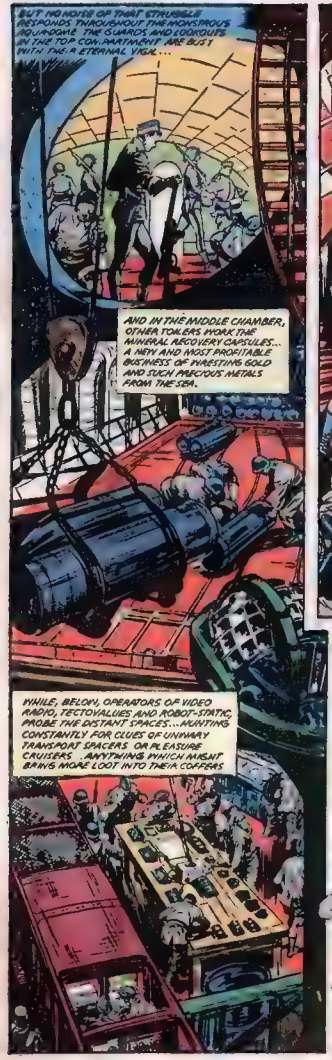
"THIS IS MY STORY. MY NAME IS FUTURA, EARTHGIRL. UNJUSTLY I WAS JUDGED 'PIRATE' BEFORE THE SPACE COURT, AND WAS ABOUT TO PROVE THE CHARGES FALSE WHEN YRINA AND GAMMA BROUGHT ME HERE TO OCEANIA YOU SAW WHAT HAPPENED... OUR SPACER WRECKED ON THE OCEAN BOTTOM WHERE MONSTERS ATTACKED US... MY ESCAPE INTO THE ARMS OF THE LIZARD CREATURES... THEN YOU LOOSED YOUR ATTRACTO-RAY AND SAVED ME. TAKE ME BACK, GOOD PEOPLE. GIVE ME A CHANCE TO CLEAR MY NAME!"

TO PLEADING FUTURA, BUT NO PITY FLICKERED FROM THE EYES OF THOSE AROUND HER. INSTEAD, THEIR LEADER MINCED FORWARD, MIMICKING, "MY NAME IS BLARGO AND..."

TIGER FAST, FUTURA SPRINGS FROM HIS GRASP, AND WITH A LIGHTNING THRUST OF LEG AND ARM SENDS BLARGO SPRAWLING.

"... I NEED A QUEEN TO HELP ME RULE MY OUTLAW BAND, SO... YOU SHALL JUST IN TIME! COME... WE WILL SEAL THE BARGAIN!"

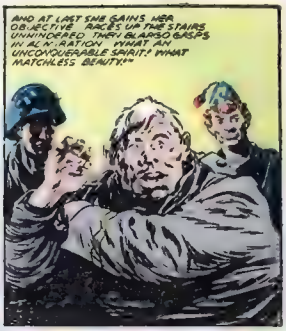
"GET HER!" HE CROAKS... "FREE ME FROM THIS VIXEN!" AND SO HIS COHORTS RUSH TO EXECUTE HIS ORDER... BUT FUTURA HAS NO MIND TO PASSIVELY SUBMIT.


BUT NO NOISE OF THAT STRUGGLE RESPONDS THROUGHOUT THE MONSTROUS AQUADOME. THE GUARDS AND LOOKOUTS IN THE TOP COMPARTMENT ARE BUSY WITH THE A ETERNAL VIGIL....
AND IN THE MIDDLE CHAMBER, OTHER TOILERS WORK THE MINERAL RECOVERY CAPSULES... A NEW AND MOST PROFITABLE BUSINESS OF WRESTING GOLD AND SUCH PRECIOUS METALS FROM THE SEA.
WHILE, BELOW, OPERATORS OF VIDEO RADIO, TECTOVALLIES AND ROBOT-STATIC, PROBE THE DISTANT SPACES... HUNTING CONSTANTLY FOR CLUES OF UNWARY TRANSPORT SPACERS OR PLEASURE CRUISERS. ANYTHING PHYSICAL MIGHT BRING MORE LOOT INTO THEIR COFFERS

AS IN THE SUB-CELLAR OF THE CRAFT, FUTURA CONTINUES HER STRUGGLE, ELUDING THE REACHING HANDS WHICH SEEK TO SAVAGE HER CAUSING HAVOC AND CONFUSION. "DON'T SHOOT THE WENCH, I WANT HER ALIVE!" SHRIEKS BLARGO.

"YOU WILL NEVER TOUCH ME AGAIN!" FUTURA ANSWERS, AND SWINGS A CHASTENED-UP PHAROPON... SOME SMIRK AND GRIN... AND WHISPER, "HER CASE IS HOPELESS!"

BUT, QUICKLY THEIR LAWGIVER RISES, AS FASTER AND MORE FURIOUS THE EARTHGIRL SWINGS THE HEAVY BATON. IT SMITES HER FULL TO THE SPINAL STRIKE! BEATING DOWN ALL WHO DARE SEEK TO HOLD HER.

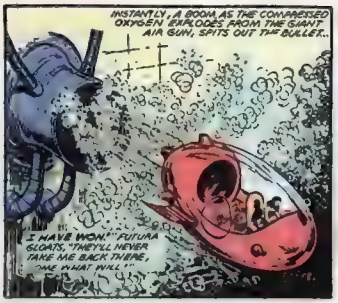

AND AT LAST SHE GAINS HER OBJECTIVE. RACES UP THE STAIRS UNHINDERED. THRU BLARSO GASPS IN ADMIRATION. "WHAT AN UNCONQUERABLE SPIRIT! WHAT MATCHLESS BEAUTY!"

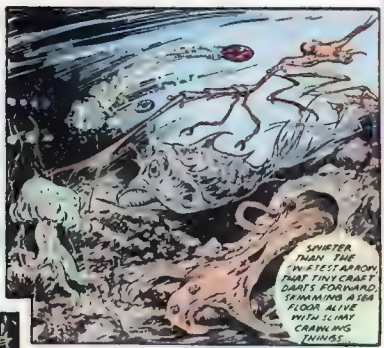
TO THE ANNOUNCER OF MISSIONS. "ATTENTION ALL DEBARMENTS! AN EARTHWOMAN IS LOOSE IN YOUR CHAMBERS! CATCH HER... BUT ONE THOUSAND GAMES TO ANYONE WHO HARMS HER!"

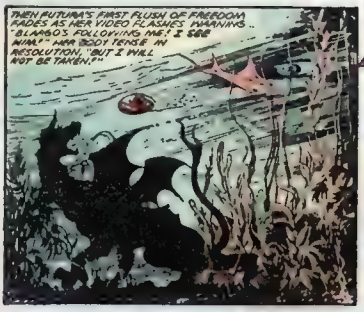
AND ON THE LAWGIVER'S OFF A ROBUST CREW CROWD CLOSE AND LISTEN. "I HOPE SHE COMES IN HERE," MUTTERS ONE

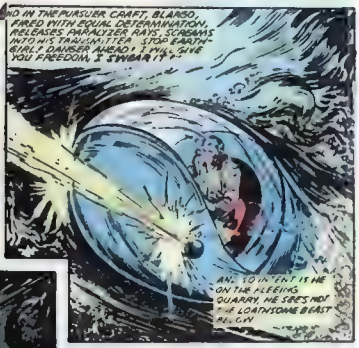
AND INSTANTLY, HIS WISH IS GRANTED. THE DOOR FLIES OPEN. A BLAZE OF PARALYZING RAYS SPRAY AMONG THEM. AND FOR HA STANDS BEFORE THAT MOTLEY CREW, "OUT OF MY WAY!"

ACROSS THE ROOM SHE STAGGERS TO THE LAUNCHING VAULT SOME TURN AS THOUGH TO STOP HER. READ DANGER IN HER SWARMING CHI'S RECONSIDER... CRINGE A MOMENT...AND NOW IT IS TOO LATE! "I LEAVE YOU!" FUTURA SHOUTS... AND ENTERS THE READIED SCOUTING SHIP.


INSTANTLY, A BOOM AS THE COMPRESSED OXYGEN EXPLODES FROM THE GIANT AIR GUN, SPITS OUT THE BULLET...
"I HAVE WON!" FUTURA GLOATS, "THEY'LL NEVER TAKE ME BACK THERE, ONE WHAT WILL"


SWIFTER THAN THE SWIFTEST ARROW, THAT TINY CRAFT DARTS FORWARD, SKIMMING A SEA FLOOR ALIVE WITH LIVING THINGS

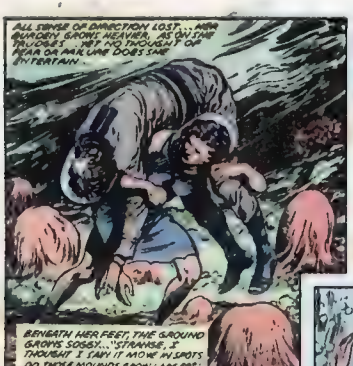

THEN FUTURA'S FIRST FLUSH OF FREEDOM FADES AS HER VIDEO FLASHES WARNING... "BLANGO'S FOLLOWING ME! I SEE HIM!" HER BODY TENSE IN RESOLUTION, "BUT I WILL NOT BE TAKEN!"


AND IN THE PURSUER CRAFT, BLANGO, FILLED WITH EQUAL DETERMINATION, RELEASES HIS MISSILE, AND SCREAMS INTO HIS TRANSMITTER "STOP EARTH-GIRL! DAUSER ALEGO! I WILL GIVE YOU FREEDOM, I SWEAR IT!"
AND SO IN FACT IS HE ON THE FLEEING QUARRY, HE SEES NOT THE LOATHSOME BEAST ALIGN

...UNTIL TOO LATE! THEN HE TRIES TO VEER ASIDE...
BUT WITH ONE STROKE OF ITS TALONED PAW, THE MONSTER CLUTCHES THE FLEEING STAGER...

FUTURA SEES. THINKS FAST. "SHE SHOWS TO PLEE ME! I MUST. I WILL TRY TO HELP HIM."

"I AM DOOMED! ALAS EARTHGIRL! SAVE YOURSELF!" BLANGO SHOUTS AS HE SEES FUTURA'S SHIP TURN TOWARD HIM!
BUT HEEDLESS OF THE PROFFERED WARNING, FUTURA FIRES ALL ROCKET POWER ..
...AND AIMS STRAIGHT TOWARD THAT REARING CREATURE. "COURAGE!" SHE THOUGHT. "ALL IS NOT YET LOST!"
BLANGO HEARS, SIGNS IN RESIGNATION, "IMPOSSIBLE FOR HER TO PUNY." HE THINKS. AS ONWARD DARTS FUTURA'S TINY SPACER... FASTER, FASTER, EVER CLOSER TO THAT MONSTER'S BLOATED BELLY...
IT STRIKES! A ROAR OF PAIN BELCHES FROM THAT THING—
AND AT THAT SPLIT SECOND OF IMPACT, FUTURA CLAPS ON HER BOWL—HELMET, JUMPS CLEAR
...STARES ABOUT IN BEWILDERMENT... SEES THE CRUSHED SHIP OF HER FORMER CAPTOR.
SHE STAGGERS TOWARD HIM, AND HER FIRST THOUGHT IS, "HE WILL DROWN UNLESS I FIND HIS HEAD-PIECE!"
...AND OF FRANTIC SEARCHING WASTED. "HE IS DEAD! HOW TO LEAVE THIS PLACE, SHE MUSES, BUT WHERE CAN I TAKE HIM? WHERE?"


ALL SENSE OF DIRECTION LOST... HER GUARDS GROW HEAVIER... AS ON THE TWILIGHT'S HOT NO THOUGHT OF FEAR OR PARALYZE DOES SHE ENTERTAIN...
BENEATH HER FEET, THE GROUND GROWS SOGGY... "STRANGE, I THOUGHT I SAW IT MOVE! HI SPOTS ON THOSE MOUNDS SAW! ALARM!"

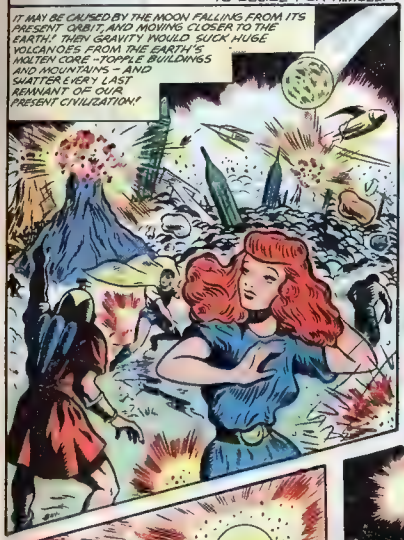
HALF BEAST, HALF MEN, THE STRANGERS FAIL TO HEED HER PLEAS. ONE PICKS HER UP. THE LEADER TURNS, "BRING THE MAN, TOO," HE ORDERS.
FUTURA TURNS IN HER CAPTOR'S GRASP. "BLARGO! BLARGO!" SHE SCREAMS "AWAKE!"

THEN, BODY AND BRAIN CAN STAND NO MORE, FUTURA GROANS, AND FAINTS, EVEN AS BLARGO STIRS, AND SEES THEIR CASE IS HOPELESS...
"IF I MUST DIE, THEN LET ME DIE WITH HER," HE THINKS. "FOR OF LIVING CREATURES, FUTURA IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND BRAVE OF ALL!"

FUTURA APPEARS IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!!

Life on other Worlds

IS THE WORLD COMING TO AN END? IF SO, HOW? THE QUESTION OF THE EARTH'S ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION HAS INTRIGUED SCIENTISTS AND LAYMEN ALIKE FOR HUNDREDS OF GENERATIONS. WE'LL PRESENT THE CASE WITH ITS POSSIBILITIES, AND WE'LL LEAVE IT UP TO THE READER TO DECIDE FOR HIMSELF.


IT MAY BE CAUSED BY THE MOON FALLING FROM ITS PRESENT ORBIT, AND MOVING CLOSER TO THE EARTH! THEN GRAVITY WOULD SUCK HUGE VOLCANOES FROM THE EARTH'S MOLTEN CORE -TOPPLE BUILDINGS AND MOUNTAINS - AND SHATTER EVERY LAST REMNANT OF OUR PRESENT CIVILIZATION!

PERHAPS THE END WILL COME FROM ANOTHER QUARTER. THE SUN, RAPIDLY LOSING ITS ENERGY, MAY ONE DAY BECOME NOTHING MORE THAN A WEAK BLOB IN THE UNIVERSE. VEGETATION WOULD VANISH FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH. THE INHABITANTS, HEAVILY INSULATED AGAINST THE COLD, WOULD FIGHT A LOSING BATTLE WITH TREMENDOUS SHEETS OF ICE MOVING FROM THE POLAR REGIONS AND DESTROYING EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATHS!

ON THE OTHER HAND, SUPPOSE THE THEORY OF AN EXPLODING SUN IS CORRECT? IF THE SUN SHOULD SUDDENLY SPEED UP ITS ROTATION, IN A FEW DAYS IT WOULD EXPLODE WITH FIERY DEVASTATION! ALL PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE WOULD WITHER, AND ALL THE MINERALS ON EARTH WOULD MELT, AS THOUGH BAKED IN A ROARING FURNACE!

THERE IS YET ANOTHER POSSIBILITY! OUR SOLAR SYSTEM IS CROWDED WITH DEAD PLANETS ROVING THROUGH SPACE AT TREMENDOUS SPEEDS. SHOULD ONE SUDDENLY SIDESWIPE THE EARTH, THE NEW FORCE OF GRAVITY IT CREATES WOULD FORM A CONE OF SUCTION GREAT ENOUGH TO PLUCK PEOPLE, VEHICLES, HOUSES, ALL THINGS INTO A GIGANTIC, AERIAL WHIRLPOOL!

THE END

AURO LORD OF JUPITER

by DICK CHARLES

GORED BY A BERSERK CIRCUS MONSTER, ROBBED OF A SECRET MEDAL THAT ALONE PROVED HIS NOBLE BIRTH, A PITIFUL FIGURE MOANS IN DELIRIUM ON A HOSPITAL COT. CAN THIS DYING OUTCAST BE THE MAN THE UNIVERSE ONCE CALLED LORD... LORD AURO OF MIGHTY JUPITER? ONLY CHIEF EDSON, LONG DEAD EARTHLING WHOSE BRAIN LIVES ON IN AURO'S SKULL, CAN KNOW...
ALAS, AURO, IF YOU DIE, I DIE WITH YOU. I AM YOUR BRAIN, AND I LIVE ONLY THROUGH YOU! WAIT- THE DOCTOR SPEAKS...
GIVE ME THE FINAL RESULTS ON THE GAMMA TESTS, NURSE.
THE PATIENT REGISTERS NEGATIVE, DOCTOR TOR. HE'LL BE DEAD IN TWO HOURS
IMPOSSIBLE! AURO, LORD OF JUPITER, DYING ON A MISERABLE OUTER PLANET, ALONE AND FRIENDLESS...
SHALL I HAVE THE DEPARTMENT OF BURIALS PREPARE A GRAVE DOCTOR TOR?
WAIT, NURSE! THAT PATIENT HAS AN AMAZINGLY STRONG BLOOD TYPE. IF WE CAN JUST FIND A SIMILAR STRAIN- PERHAPS IN THE SWAMPS OF MAR... ONLY A SLIM CHANCE...

SOON, IN THE MURKY BOGS OF MIR, A CREATURE OF ANOTHER AGE LOOMS OUT OF THE SWAMP MIST. SWIFTLY AN EMERGENCY HOSPITAL SPACER SPLASHES TO THE SOGGY FLATS. AN ARMY OF HUNTERS EMERGE AND CREEP FORWARD TO SURROUND THE RAGING HULK. AN INTERNE BARKS TERSE ORDERS...

REMEMBER--DON'T KILL HIM! ONLY SNARE HIM WELL WITH YOUR LANCE CABLES. DOCTOR TOR WANTS THIS JOB DONE WITHIN AN HOUR! FIRE!

THAT'S IT! BRING UP THE DISTILLER APPARATUS! ATTACH TRANSFUSO TUBES! START SUCTION PUMPERS! HURRY!

DRAW THREE QUARTOS OF THE RANGO'S BLOOD. I HOPE IT'S THE SPECIMEN DOCTOR TOR WANTS.

IT'S TRIPLE QUANTRUM PLUS. WE HAVE A FULL CRUCIBLE. I'LL RUSH IT TO THE HOSPITAL!

LATER--

THE SPECIMENS MATCH! I'VE GIVEN THE PATIENT A FULL INJECTION OF RANGO CORPUSCLES. WE SHOULD HAVE RESULTS ANY SECO NOW...

YOU MUST LIVE, AURO! WAKE! AH... HE STIRS.

W-WHERE AM I? MY HEAD... OHH... WHAT IS THIS? IT IS GONE!

LISTEN! HE MUMBLES INSANELY!

NAY! MY MEDAL THAT WAS ABOUT MY NECK HAS DISAPPEARED! YOU BEGGARS HAVE STOLEN IT! RETURN IT OR YOU SHALL ALL TASTE THE WRATH OF AURO!

GIVE IT HERE! YOU TOOK MY MEDAL AS I LAY!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, PATIENT AURO. GET BACK IN THAT BED! YOU'RE A SICK MAN!
OBEY HIM, AURO! HE DIDN'T STEAL YOUR IDENTIFICATION MEDAL! YOU'RE WRONG!
TELL ME WHERE IT IS! SPEAK, ACCURSED DOCTOR!
OOF! HE'S MAD! SEIZE HIM!
HURRY, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! I HAVEN'T GIVEN HIM AN ANTIDOTE! THAT RANGO BLOOD IS DANGEROUS! THE AFTER EFFECTS CAN BE FATAL!
I WON'T STOP TILL I FIND IT!
AURO, HEED ME!
WHILE IN A HIDDEN LABORATORY -
SO THAT IS A PROJECTION OF AURO'S MEDAL, AKIM?
YES, SALA, IT'S A ROYAL CREST — POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION THAT THE MAN YOU STOLE IT FROM IS AURO, LORD OF JUPITER! BUT COME TO THE ELECTRODE TABLE YONDER..
BEHOLD, SALA! THAT SUBJECT IN MY NEUTRALIZATION CHAMBER WILL MAKE ME KING OF JUPITER! HE IS READY FOR THE ANODE TREATMENT - I'LL PRESS THE SPARK LEVER.
YOU'LL VOID HIS BRAIN OF ALL THOUGHT! HE'LL BE HELPLESS WITHOUT CONTROLS, AKIM!
PRECISELY! I WILL CONTROL HIM THROUGH ME, THIS GUINEA PIG WILL BE AURO, LORD OF JUPITER! I HAVE AN EXACT COPY OF AURO'S OLD UNIFORM FOR HIM!
THEY DO LOOK SIMILAR. BUT THE JUPITERIANS WILL WANT PROOF, AKIM!
HERE IT IS, SALA - AURO'S SECRET MEDAL IS THE FINISHING TOUCH! THIS PUPPET WILL RETURN TO JUPITER AS AURO — UNDER MY THUMB!
BRILLIANT, AKIM. I THINK IT WILL WORK! I'LL READY A FLEET OF SPACERS! WE'LL SOON BLAST OFF FOR JUPITER — OUR JUPITER!
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SO HERE LIVES THE ROBBER WHO STRIPPED ME OF MY ROYAL CREST. THAT VINE SHALL GIVE ME ENTRANCE!
THE EVILDOERS MUST PLOT AGAINST MY NATIVE JUPITER. IF THEY HAVE NEED OF MY MEDAL...AHH... I NEAR THE PLASTA WINDOW YONDER...
MEANWHILE, A RAGING PATIENT SMASHES FREE OF HIS SICK ROOM, AND PLUNGES INTO THE STREETS. A REINFORCED AURO FINALLY PAUSES TO HEED THE ADVICE OF HIS ALTER-BRAIN, CHET BESON, WHO RECALLS THE DISGUISED NURSE, SALA, WHO ROBBED HIM WHILE UNCONSCIOUS. A CHECK OF POLICE PHOTO FILES AND ADDRESSES SENDS A FURIOUS AURO RACING TO A GRIM LABORATORY BUILDING IN THE HILLS. OMINOUS HALLS LOOM FORBIDDINGLY, AND FROM THE SLIME OF AN ENCIRCLING MOAT, ANGRY PROTECTORS RISE IN UGLY HORROR...
'TIS DONE! NOW TO SEEK OUT THE THIEVES... WHAT! WHO STANDS THERE WITHIN THE ROOM?
'TIS THE VERY IMAGE OF MYSELF! HE WEARS MY MEDAL! HE WOULD TAKE MY PLACE AS LORD OF JUPITER!
IT IS THE REAL AURO, AKIM! HE'S RUSHING AT YOUR HUMAN ROBOT!
SPEAK, YE PALE IMITATOR OF JUPITER'S RULER! IF YOU WISH MY POSITION, THEN INDEED MUST YOU BATTLE FOR IT! HMM...
OOH!
THAT WILL SETTLE THE TEMPESTUOUS AURO! SHALL I THROW HIM INTO THE MOAT, AKIM?
NO, FOOL GIRL! THIS IS INCORRECT! I WILL OPERATE AND MAKE THE REAL AURO MY PAWN! THEN, SALA, WE CANNOT FAIL!

LATER, AT A SECRET AIRSTRIP ADJOINING AKIM'S CASTLE LABORATORY, A GLEAMING ARMADA OF SPACE SHIPS HUMS AS TURBO BLASTERS ARE TUNED FOR TRAVEL. SLAVE WORKERS BUSTLE WITH PREPARATIONS. THEN A SUDDEN HUSH—ALL EYES TURN TO A GIANT FIGURE WHO STRIDES IMPERIOUSLY FORWARD. IT IS AKIM, MASTER OF THEIR BRAINS AND THEIR SOULS.
ATTENTION, SLAVES! PROCEED TO YOUR SPACERS, SQUAD LEADERS, AND FOLLOW MY GUIDE SHIP TO JUPITER. OBEY ALL ORDERS GIVEN OVER MY TRANSCOM MICROPHONE. GO!
SOON...
WE'RE ALL SET, SALA. I WILL PRETEND TO BE AURO'S PHYSICIAN, AND HE WILL ISSUE COMMANDS ONLY THROUGH ME! WE'LL RULE ALL JUPITER! HERE WE GO! BLAST OFF.
WHAT A WELCOME WE'LL RECEIVE! THEY'LL THINK WE'RE AURO'S ROYAL COURTIERS AND SERVANTS. BUT HASTEN, SALA, BRING AURO HERE. IT IS TIME FOR HIS BRAIN TREATMENT!
YES, AKIM, HE'S SAFELY LOCKED IN AN AFT COMPARTMENT. I'LL GET HIM IN THE NEUTRALIZER!
FINE! HIS BRAIN WILL SOON BE PUTTY IN MY HANDS!
THIS IS THE ROOM. WHAT? AURO IS GONE? ONLY A SLEEPING RANGO PUP OCCUPIES THE CHAMBER!
AKIM! AURO'S ESCAPED! THE ROOM'S EMPTY!
YOU FOOL! IT'S YOUR FAULT! WE CAN'T TURN BACK NOW! WAIT! THAT NOISE!
AS IN THE REAR CHAMBER, A GROWING BEAST SLINKS FORWARD THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR...
ALAS, POOR AURO! THE DOCTOR WARNED THAT THE RANGO BLOOD WOULD BE FATAL! IT'S TERRIBLE—THE LORD OF JUPITER TRANSFORMED INTO A CRAWLING MONSTER!
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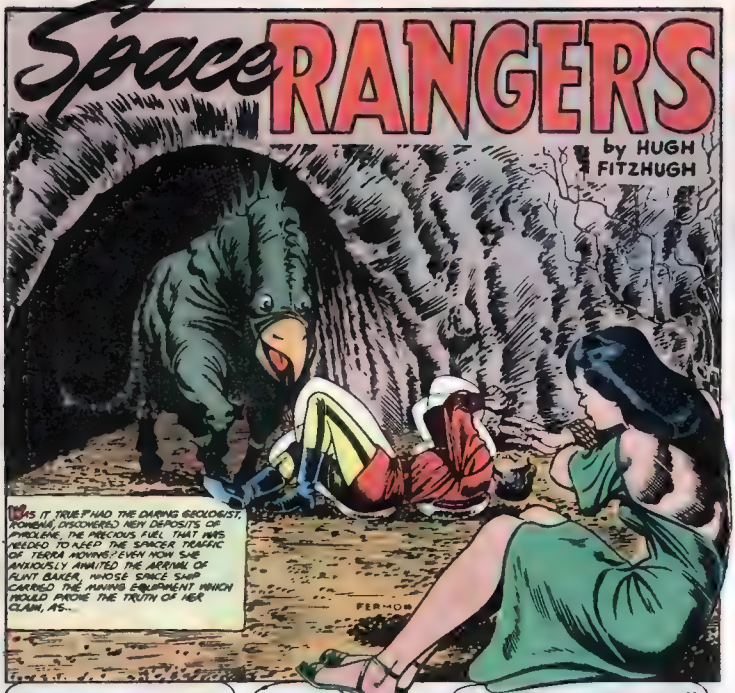
IT'S COMING FROM THE ART ROOM—SOME ANIMAL...LOOK! IT'S CHANGING! NO! IT CAN'T BE!
WHERE...MY HEAD SPINS... I'M RETURNING TO NORMAL... AKIM... MUST STOP HIM...
THANK GOODNESS THE CHANGE WAS ONLY TEMPORARY! BUT BEWARE, AURO! BEWARE!
AGAIN WE MEET, FOUL AKIM! SO IT WAS ME YOU PLANNED TO USE INSTEAD OF YOUR SLAVE! YOU WILL NEVER SUCCEED!
STOP HIM, SALA!
NAY, DEVIL WORKER! I SMASH YOUR DREAMS OF CONQUEST!
WE NEAR JUPITER. I MUST TURN BACK AKIM'S INVASION FLEET. THE TRANSCOM...
ATTENTION, SLAVES! REVERSE COURSE! RETURN TO TAKE-OFF POINT! THIS IS YOUR MASTER AKIM! OBEY!
LATER...
YES, AURO, YET REMEMBER THE RANGO BLOOD COURSING YOUR VEINS. AT ANY MOMENT YOU MAY RETURN TO A MONSTER'S UGLY FORM! BEWARE!
AKIM AND SALA IN CHAINS, AND MY WEARY TRAVELS ENDED. HOME! 'TIS INDEED A TIME FOR REJOICING
THEY'RE TURNING BACK! MY MUFFLED VOICE DECEIVED THEM! AND AHEAD LIES MY NATIVE JUPITER!

NEW ADVENTURES OF AURO IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!!

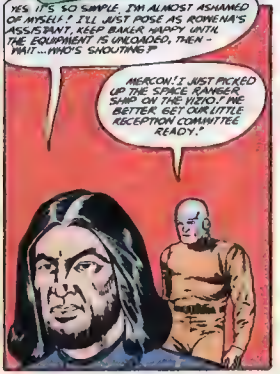
Space RANGERS

by HUGH FITZHUGH


WAS IT TRUE? HAD THE DARING GEOLOGIST, ROWENA, DISCOVERED NEW DEPOSITS OF PYROLENE, THE PRECIOUS FUEL THAT WAS NEEDED TO KEEP THE SPACER TRAFFIC OF TERRA MOVING? EVEN NOW SHE ANXIOUSLY AWAITED THE ARRIVAL OF FLINT BAKER, WHOSE SPACE SHIP CARRIED THE MINING EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD PROVE THE TRUTH OF HER CLAIM, AS...
FERMOR

THANK YOU FOR SENDING THAT MESSAGE TO SPACER HEADQUARTERS, MY DEAR ROWENA! YOU'VE BEEN MOST COOPERATIVE!
YOU THINK YOU'RE PRETTY CLEVER DON'T YOU, MERCON? BUT YOU WON'T FOOL FLINT BAKER!

LISTEN TO HER RAVE, SOLTX BAKER'LL WALTZ RIGHT INTO OUR TRAP WITH ALL THAT MINING STUFF WE NEED!
RIGHT, MERCON. THIS IS REALLY GOING TO BE EASY!


YES, IT'S SO SIMPLE. I'M ALMOST ASHAMED OF MYSELF! I'LL JUST POSE AS ROWENA'S ASSISTANT, KEEP BAKER HAPPY UNTIL THE EQUIPMENT IS UNLOADED, THEN - WAIT... WHO'S SHOUTING?
MERCON! I JUST PICKED UP THE SPACE RANGER SHIP ON THE VIZIO.* HE BETTER GET OUR LITTLE RECEPTION COMMITTEE READY.

I TELL YOU, HERC, ALL I KNOW ABOUT THIS DEAL IS WHAT SPACER HEADQUARTERS TOLD ME! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DELIVER THE MINING EQUIPMENT AT COORDINATES RX--I, TO A GEOLOGIST, NAMED ROWENA, MAHO..
LISTEN, FLINT, THE SPACEGRAM'S EXCITING LIKE MAD! WE MUST BE RIGHT OVER OUR DESTINATION, NOW!
JETS CUT OUT, FLINT. LANDING SPEED--1.4 MACH! RETRACTO FLAPS LOWERED - STAND BY-- WE'RE GLIDING IN!
GOOD! OKAY, MEN, INTO YOUR SPACE SUITS! PILOT -- CUT YOUR JETS AND PREPARE TO LAND ON THAT LEDGE OF ROCKS!
THEN, AS THE RANGER SHIP COMES TO A HALT AND THE TASK OF UNLOADING BEGINS, A LONE FIGURE APPEARS ..
SO, ROWENA SENT YOU OUT TO MEET US, EH, MERCON? DON'T TELL ME TERRA'S LEADING WOMAN GEOLOGIST IS TOO BUSY TO SEE ALL THE PRETTY GADGETS WE DELIVERED.. WHERE IS SHE?
WHY...ER..SHE'S TIED UP IN HER EXPERIMENTAL LAB NOT FAR FROM HERE!
I WONDER WHAT'S HOLDING UP THE BOYS?
HOLY SMOKE, FLINT, LOOK- COMING TOWARD US FROM BEHIND THAT ROCK PILE!
C'MON, BOYS, THE SCHEME LOOKED JUST LIKE THE BOSS'S SAID IT WOULD! GRAB BAKER AND THE REST OF HIS CREW!
WHAT THE WHERE DID THEY COME FROM - NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS - MUST ACT FAST!
ON YOUR TOES, RANGERS, THESE GUYS MEAN BUSINESS! HEY, MERCON, GIVE US A HAND HERE!
YOU BET I WILL, BAKER!
HERE'S THE HAND YOU WANTED, SUCKER, WRAPPED AROUND A BLASTER! LET 'EM HAVE IT, BOYS!
2

LATER...
THAT DOES IT, MERCON! BAKER AND HIS GANG MIGHT SCON'ANYPLACE NOW! HOW ABOUT THE GAL?
LEAVE HER OUT HERE WITH THE SPACERS. WE'RE ALL LOADED AND READY TO BLAST OFF!
OOH-WHAT HAPPENED? MERC-WONDER WHERE HE IS? WAIT-THOSE VOICES!
HERC-HERC-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, KID? THOSE JOKER'S CERTAINLY CAUGHT US OFF GUARD THAT TIME!
YEAH, THEY MUST'VE GIVEN KONGAM THE SAME TREATMENT, TOO! LOOK, SHE'S STILL OUT COLD!
AS...
NOW, SOLIX, FOR THE FINAL TOUCH BEFORE WE LEAVE! REMEMBER THAT GIRL HE SAW GO INTO THAT CAVE? I THINK HE'D ENJOY MEETING BAKER AND HIS FRIENDS?
I GETCHA, BOSS! TAKING NO CHANCES, EH? HELL, I'LL JUST STIR HIM UP WITH A LITTLE BLAST! WATCH!
WHAT THE...! MERCON'S SPACERS FIRING RIGHT INTO THE CAVE. THERE'S SOMETHING SCREWY GOING ON HERE, HERC. I THOUGHT THEY WERE TAKING OFF!
SO DID I, FLINT, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE CHANGED THEIR MINDS. NO, WAIT - THEY'RE GETTING SET TO LEAVE NOW!
AND AS THE SPACER ZOOMS INTO THE AIR...
LISTEN, FLINT, THAT ROARING NOISE - IT'S SOUNDS AS THOUGH THE EARTH'S RUMBLING! WHAT IS IT?
SLOWLY, THE TERRIFYING SOUND INCREASES IN VOLUME! SUDDENLY, AN ENRAGED SAURIASOR EMERGES FROM THE MAW OF BLACKNESS OF THE CAVE! ITS SIGHTLESS HEAD SNIFFS AT THE AIR, THEN...
GOOD GRIEF, FLINT, SO THAT'S WHY THOSE CROOKS SCRAPED THE CAVE BEFORE THEY TOOK OFF!
EXACTLY, HERC, AND UNLESS I CAN THINK OF SOMETHING FAST - WE'RE DEAD DUCKS!
3

MEANWHILE, NEARBY...
IT SURE WAS A STROKE O'LUCK WHEN I GOT WIND OF ROMENA'S FINDINGS UP HERE, SOLIX!
YOU SAID IT, BOSS--AND THANKS TO THAT FOOL BAKER, WE CAN DIG IT OUT TOO!
HA--JUST LOOK AT THIS PRECIOUS FUEL, SOLIX! NOT A SPACER ON TERRA CAN RUN WITHOUT IT...
AND I, MERCON, CAN WRITE MY OWN TICKET FROM NOW ON, OR TERRA DOESN'T GET A DROP OF IT. THE FOOLS. THEY'LL GET ON THEIR KNEES AND BEG FOR THIS PYROLENE!
MEANWHILE...
WATCH OUT, FLINT. THAT MONSTER'S REARING BACK TO STRIKE!
DON'T WORRY. HE'S BLIND--DEPENDS UPON HIS SENSE OF SMELL. NOW, IF I CAN ONLY KEEP OUT OF HIS WAY UNTIL I REACH THIS INFLATO-VALVE...
THERE--I MADE IT! MY SPACE SUIT'S STARTING TO INFLATE! I HOPE THE ROPES AREN'T TOO STRONG! WAIT--THE BRUTE'S MOVING TOWARD ME!
AND AS FLINT'S SUIT EXPANDS, THE ROPES GROAN IN PROTEST--THEN SNAP! INSTANTLY...
WOW--THAT'S THE FASTEST DRAW I'VE EVER MADE IN MY LIFE!
IT COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED AT A BETTER TIME, FLINT! NOW CUT US LOOSE--WE'VE GOT TO STOP MERCON AND HIS CUTTHROATS!
THE BOY HAS THE RIGHT IDEA, FLINT. BAKER, AND I THINK I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM, TOO. HE'S PROBABLY RIGHT AT THE SPOT WHERE I FOUND THE PYROLENE!
SAY NO MORE, MONEY! AS SOON AS I ROUND UP MY MEN, YOU CAN GUIDE US TO THE PLACE! LET'S GO!
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SOON AS FLINT'S SPACER HANDS, IN PURSUIT OF THE TREACHEROUS MERCON...

YOU SAY, WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE SITE OF THE PYROLENE, EH, ROWENA? I'LL SWAP ON THE VIDIO AND TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
GOOD IDEA, BAKER. MERCON'S A SMART OPERATOR! WE DON'T WANT TO BE TROPED AGAIN!
LOOK-ON THE TELE-SCREEN! HE'S THERE ALL RIGHT—AND DIGGING THE ORE TOO.
WONDERFUL! THAT SHOULD KEEP HIM OCCUPIED WHILE I COOK UP A LITTLE SURPRISE. HMM—I BETTER CHECK MY PARA-RAY GUNS!
WHAT THE...GOOD THING I OPENED THIS CONTROL PANEL—THAT DOG MERCON MADE OFF WITH OUR DYNA-WAFFLOR—NOW OUR GUNS ARE USELESS. BUT HE'RE NOT, I CKED 'IM! I'VE GOT ANOTHER IDEA!
AS, BELOW...
HE GOT ABOUT ALL THE PYROLENE HE CAN HANDLE THIS TRIP, SOLIX! HE BETTER GET STARTED BACK TO TERRA. I HAVE A LITTLE BUSINESS TO DISCUSS WITH THE FUEL COUNCIL!
SURE THING, BOSS! IT'S GONNA BE A PLEASURE TO WATCH THEIR FACES WHEN YOU TELL THEM ABOUT HOW YOU CONTROL THEIR FUEL SUPPLY NOW! I'LL...WAIT—WHAT'S THAT?
MERCON, LOOK, IT'S THE RANGER SPACER!
HE'S RIGHT, BOSS, IT IS! THEY MANAGED TO GET AWAY SOMEHOW. WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
JUST FOLLOW ME BOYS, I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO HANDLE FLINT BAKER!
SO, HE WANTS TO BE A HERO AND BUNGLE WITH US—WITHOUT HIS GUNS! OKAY, RANGER, LET'S SEE YOU DUCK THIS!
DIRECT HIT! NOW THERE'S NO ONE ALIVE WHO CAN BLAB ON US! LET'S GO OUT AND WATCH IT RAIN SPACE RANGERS, MEN!

TAKE A GOOD LOOK, BOYS, THAT PIECE OF SPACE-JUNK MAKES A FITTING TOMBSTONE FOR THAT BAKER FOOL! ARE YOU READY TO GO, SQUAT?
ALL SET, MERCON, JUST GIVE US THE WORD! WAIT—THAT NOISE!
LOOK—UP THERE, HOVERING OVER US!
I SEE IT, BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
NO IT ISN'T, WISE GUY, YOU'RE NOT LOOKING AT A GHOST! IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, JUST TRY SOME FUNNY BUSINESS AND I'LL PROVE IT!
YOU BLASTED IMBECILES—DO YOU THINK I'LL LET YOU STOP ME NOW? OKAY, BOYS, MAKE 'EM WISH THEY HADN'T COME HERE!
WATCH OUT—THEY'RE DRAWING THEIR BLASTERS! QUICK, HERC BOY, GIVE THIS SPACE SLED THE OLD ROCKABYE TREATMENT!
ZAP THEM, YOU FOOLS, IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE! WE CAN'T LET THEM TAKE US!
IT'S NO USE, MERCON, WE CAN'T HIT 'EM—THE SLED KEEPS ROCKING FROM SIDE TO SIDE!
TOO BAD, YOU CREEPS, BUT WE CAN HIT YOU—ON THE UPSWING! LET 'EM HAVE THE PARA-RAY, ROWENA, WE'LL PUT THEM ON ICE FOR AWHILE!
RUN.. RUN...TOO LATE...I CAN'T MOVE...OOH!
LATER...
WELL, RUNT, MERCON AND HIS BOYS SURE SAVED US A LOT OF WORK BY DIGGING OUT THIS LOAD OF PYROLENE!
MAYBE SO, ROWENA, BUT LET'S HOPE MINING THE STUFF AFTER THIS WILL BE EASIER THAN THE WAY WE DID IT!

SPACE RANGERS APPEAR IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS.!!

THE ZOGS OF XENA

By THORNECLIFFE HERRICK

THE first thing Kal noticed was the silence. It pressed at him like a great weight. He looked around him. Everything he saw was still and cold. Far across the field he saw a man, sprawled out on the ground. A sort of shapeless heap. His eyes swept over the gaping hangars. They were deserted.

For a moment Kal sat there. This was Xena City. This was a city he had traveled half across the Universe to reach. He had thought to find work here, live amongst the people and grow with them. And instead he found this, desolate, bleak, forbidding.

For a moment longer Kal sat in the cabin of his small ship, and then he stirred. He climbed out onto the field and started across it slowly. He wore a radia-gun, and his hand hovered close to it.

He walked toward the hangars, and beyond them, heading for the towering buildings in the distance. He could see the city plainly now, and it seemed dim and unreal. He saw no moving thing.

He moved between the first buildings. They seemed to close on him. He slipped the radia-gun from his belt. Felt better then.

He stopped suddenly. An electric needle seemed to be touching his heart. He saw people. Or what had been people. Grotesque, almost hideous, in death.

He walked among them, feeling a coldness through his body. It was as though they watched him, these sightless, wretched corpses, and laughed at him for remaining. Here a child, small arms out-flung, stared wide-eyed at the sky. Here a woman, once long-limbed, lovely and delicate. Now contorted with lines of horror, streaked with sores of hurt. Here another woman.

The cold needle touched his heart again. Here another, woman—stirring, opening her eyes, moaning. Alive!

Kal knelt beside her. Waited, while she stared around her and slow fear crept into her eyes.

"What happened here?" he asked gently.

"Are they gone?" her voice was small and frightened.

"Who? What happened?"

She raised her head, and Kal saw that she was young and fine-featured.

"The Zogs," she whispered. "They came so suddenly. One minute the city was alive with laughter and strolling people, and then there were screams and terror and death. They came through the street swiftly, snarling and shrieking, killing."

The Zogs, he thought. Slaves of man. Beasts who worked the Titanium mines. They were harmless, docile creatures. Huge, yes, and powerful. But they had never been known to revolt. Their minds were controlled by men, their actions directed by telepathy. And yet, this girl told him they had *attacked!*

Kal felt the sudden pressure of her fingers on his arm. And he saw the creature, swaying in the center of the street about a hundred yards away. The Zog was sniffing at the body of a child, its delicate antennas, sensitive enough to pick up the thoughts of humans, quivering with alien delight. It was a gigantic hairy brute, its hulking body slightly unbalanced on six cat-like legs.

Even as Kal watched the creature a second appeared, and then a third, coming around the corner of a building. Kal spied an open doorway and he and the girl ran for it. Behind them the Zogs set up a sudden screeching.

The two humans fled up a flight of metal stairs and found a window on the second landing. They were surprised to see that the Zogs had not been pursuing them, but were pounding their massive bodies against the wall of a smaller building up the street. Some one was waving a white cloth from a window of the besieged structure .

Under the Zogs' savage attack the front wall of the building soon crumbled. One of the lumbering monsters clambered through a gaping hole. A hoarse, pained scream rent the air as some person within the structure found death.

For a moment there was a terrible silence, broken only by the dry sobs of the girl. She was a quivering, hunted thing, fragile and lovely and helpless. Something stirred in Kal's breast, and he found himself wishing they were far away from this place. He saw himself holding her close to him, touching her lips with his, saying softly that he loved her. It was a strange dream for such a moment.

A look of helpless anger came into the girl's eyes. "Those men. The ones they arrested in the mines yesterday. They are criminals, and yet they are safe in the Administration Build-

ing. While the people of the city—"

"Criminals? Arrested? Take it easy. That story may be common knowledge in Xena City, but I'm a stranger here."

The Venusian Zog-master was arrested yesterday. He's the man who directed the work of the animals. He and some other men in the mine were stealing Titanium. They would load the precious metal on the Zogs and then the Zog-master would direct them into the hills north of Xena City. Three space-planes were kept there. They were used to take the Titanium off the planet."

"And those men are being held in the Administration Building?" Kal asked.

The girl nodded. "Just a few streets from here. They live in safety, and the people of Xena City die."

Kal looked out of the window furtively. The Zogs were gone, he saw; probably on the trail of some other helpless victim. Further up the street he could see a large metal structure. The Administration Building, safe and impenetrable. He turned back to the girl.

"I want you to stay here," he said. "I'm going to make a dash for that place."

The girl shook her head. "I won't stay here alone. If you leave, I'm going with you."

Kal glanced again at the street below. It was void of movement. "It looks safe enough," he said to the girl. "Come on!"

They moved down the metal stairs quickly and silently. They hesitated for a moment on the street, and then started to run.

Steering a course through the clutter of corpses, Kal led the way.

They were half-way to the steel building when a great, lumbering beast appeared suddenly on the street behind them. A terrible, blood-chilling screech cut the air. It soon grew in volume as other creatures joined the first. The thud of their heavy, padded feet mounted like a rolling of drums as they started in pursuit.

The girl was sobbing her fear as she ran. Her hand closed like a vise over Kal's. He pulled her ahead desperately. It would be a close race to the building and he prayed that she would not break down.

Relief flooded through Kal as they reached the Administration Building. He pounded on the great door. The Zogs were almost upon them now, but they would be inside in a second.

It seemed an endless time until the metal door swung open. Kal forced his way in, dragging the girl after him. A uniformed guard slammed the door and bolted it. An instant later a great thudding echoed through the building. The Zogs were attacking—and it seemed certain that they would break in.

Kal grabbed the guard by the sleeve. "Quick!" he shouted. Take me to the men who were arrested in the mines yesterday! Hurry, man! No questions!"

The guard had seemed about to speak. But at Kal's urgent words he snapped into motion instead.

They dashed to the second floor, and Kal saw a row of cells there. The guard held out some keys wordlessly and pointed to one of the barred rooms.

A giant crashing sound came from below. The Zogs had broken through!

As he fumbled with the lock, Kal stared through the bars. His eyes ran over the men in the cell—an unkempt, evil-looking lot. His eyes stopped when they fell upon a tall, yellow-skinned man dressed in the uniform of a Zog-master.

The bars swung in. Kal drew his radia-gun and stepped into the room—moving straight for the Venusian Zog-master. Behind him, coming from the direction of the stairs, he heard the snarling and howling of the approaching Zogs. Without hesitation, Kal brought up the radia-gun and slammed the barrel across the Zog-master's skull. The man dropped without a sound.

For a moment there was complete silence. Then the guard exclaimed, "What did you do that for? Are you insane?"

"Listen," Kal said, smiling. "The Zogs. They have stopped!"

No one spoke. And a great stillness filled the place. A giant Zog came up into the corridor from the stairs, but he moved aimlessly, intending no harm.

"Don't you see?" Kal exclaimed. "This man. The Zog-master. He controlled the beasts in the mine, directed them with his thoughts. When he was arrested, he continued to direct them. He thought only one thought, 'Kill! Destroy! Allow no human to live!' and the creatures obeyed him. In that way he had his revenge. When I knocked him out, he could no longer direct their actions. They became mindless, helpless creatures." He addressed the guard now. "Round up some men. Tie these creatures down. Get them secured before this guy comes to and everything will be all right."

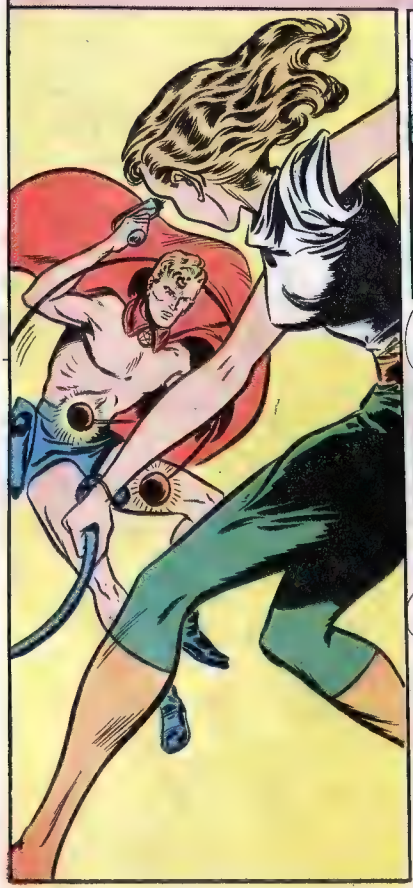
"Yes, sir!" the guard said, and moved off.

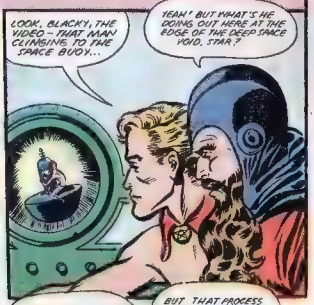
Kal stepped toward the girl. He kept his gun pointed in the direction of the prisoners —but at that moment, if they had known it, they could have escaped. Kal's mind was on the girl, repeating the little dream he had had before, being warmed by the gentle little smile that lighted her eyes as he approached.

STAR PIRATE

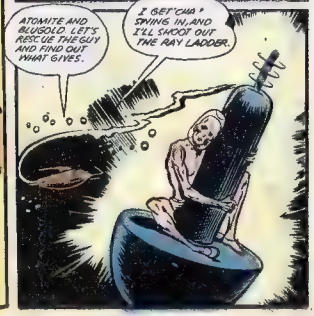
by LEN DODSON

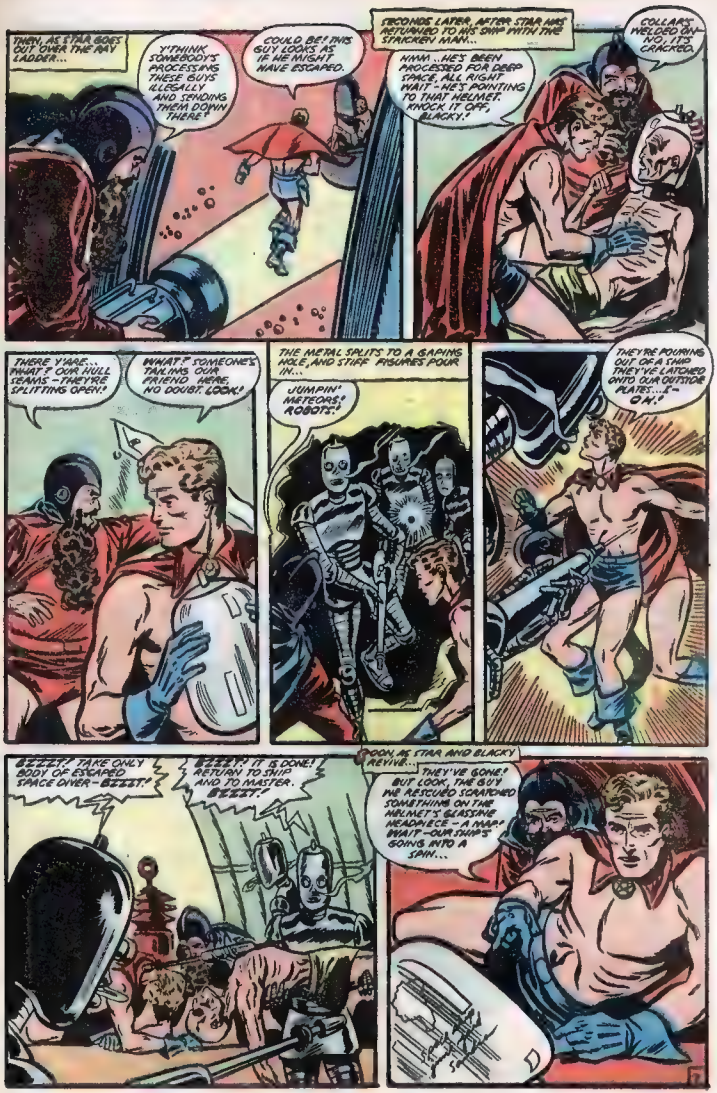
"HELP! SPACE BUOY XY...CAN'T HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER!" MUFFLED AND INDISTINCT, THE DISTRESS CALL CRACKLED THROUGH GALAXY 9 - BUT AS STAR PIRATE AND BLACKY RACED TOWARD THE OUTER FRINGES OF THE DREADED DEEP SPACE VOID, THE SIGNALS GREW LOUDER, LOUDER...

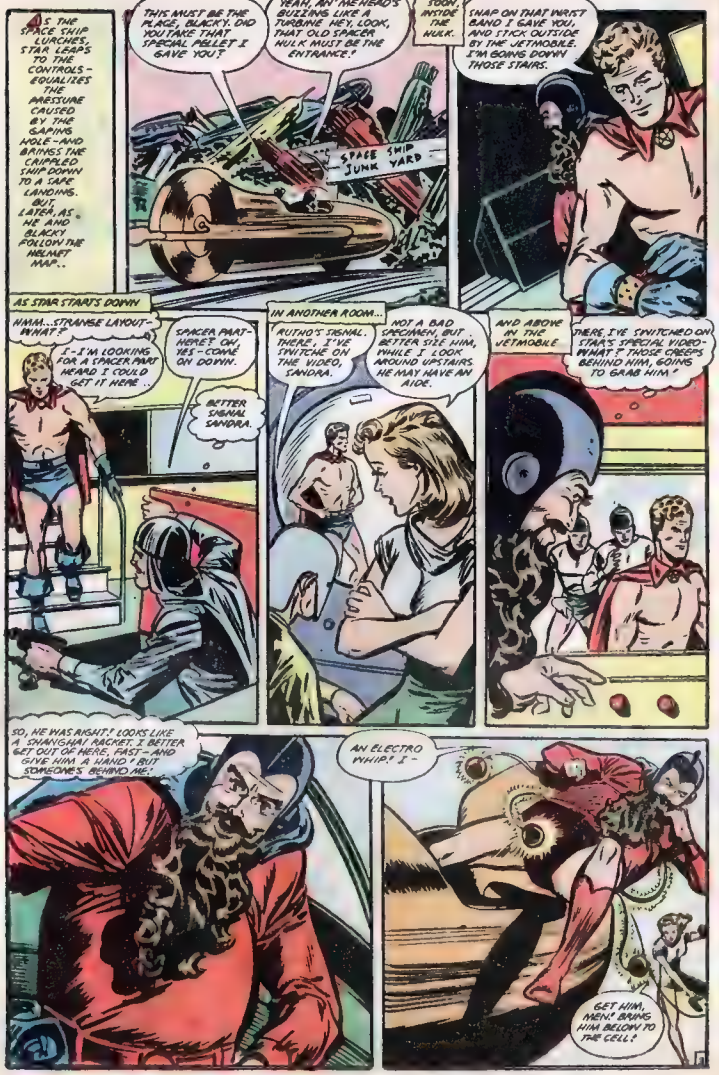



LOOK, BLACKY, THE VIDEO - THAT MAN CLINGING TO THE SPACE BUOY...
YEAH! BUT WHAT'S HE DOING OUT HERE AT THE EDGE OF THE DEEP SPACE VOID, STAR?

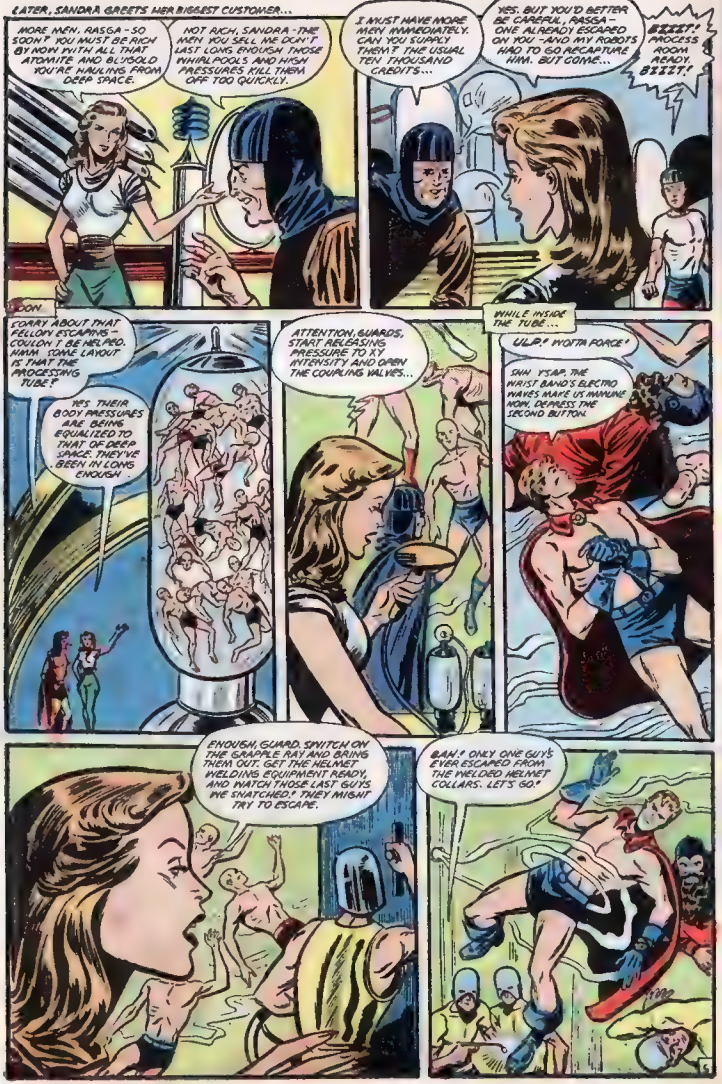
THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW! NO ORDINARY SPACE MAN DARES ENTER THAT SECTION, UNLESS THEY'VE BEEN SPECIALLY PROCESSED FOR IT!
BUT THAT PROCESS BUSINESS HAS BEEN OUTLAWED FOR YEARS. WHAT'S DOWN THERE, ANYWAY?



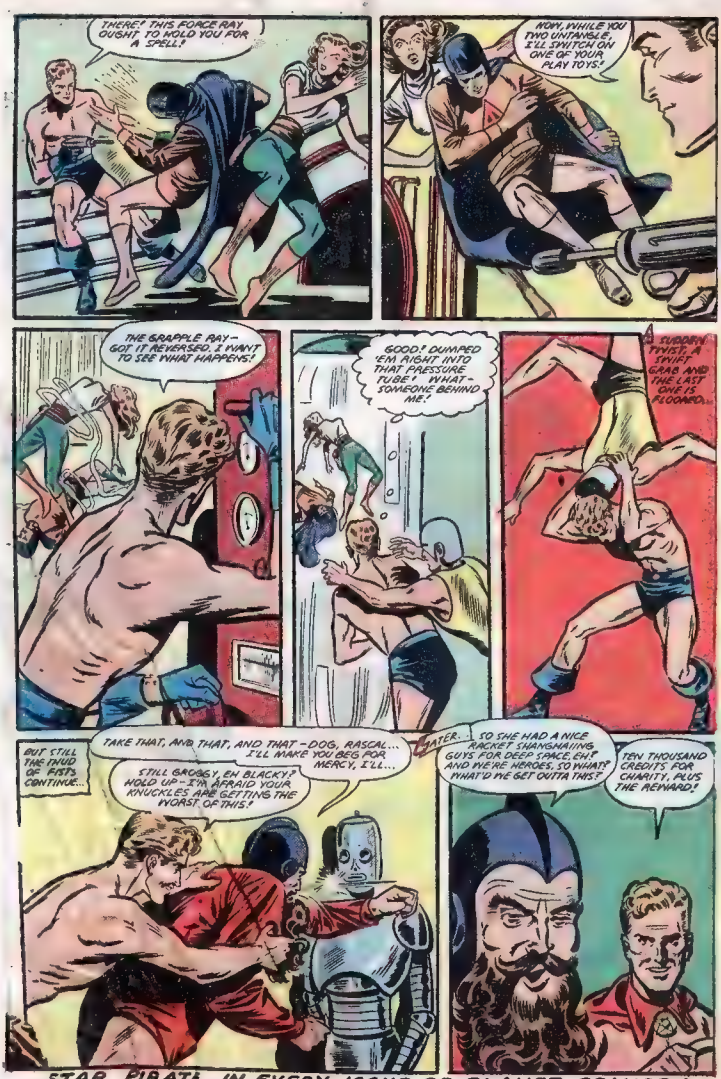

THEN, AS STAR GOES OUT OVER THE RAY LADDER...
Y'THINK SOMEBODY'S PROCESSING THESE GUYS ILLEGALLY AND SENDING THEM DOWN THERE?
COULD BE! THIS GUY LOOKS AS IF HE MIGHT HAVE ESCAPED.
7 SECONDS LATER, AFTER STAR HAS RETURNED TO HIS SHIP WITH THE STRICKEN MAN...
NAAH.. HE'S BEEN PROCESSED FOR DEEP SPACE. ALL RIGHT MAIT - HE'S POINTING TO THAT HELMET. KNOCK IT OFF, BLACKY!
COLLARS WELDED ON. NO, IT'S CRACKED.
THERE Y'ARE... WHAT? OUR HULL SEAMS - THEY'RE SPLITTING OPEN!
WHAT? SOMEONE'S TALKING OUR FAIENO HERE, NO DOUBT. LOOK!
THE METAL SPLITS TO A GAPING HOLE, AND STIFF FIGURES POUR IN...
JUMPIN' METEORS, ROBOTS!
THEY'RE POURING OUT OF A SHIP! THEY'VE LATCHED ONTO OUR OUTSIDE PLATES... I— OH!
BZZZT! TAKE ONLY BODY OF ESCAPED SPACE DIVER - BZZZT!
BZZZT! IT IS DONE! RETURN TO SHIP AND TO MASTER. BZZZT!
SOON, AS STAR AND BLACKY REVIVE...
THEY'VE GONE! BUT LOOK, THE GUY WE RESCUED SCRATCHED SOMETHING ON THE HELMET'S GLASSINE HEADPIECE - A MAP! WAIT - OUR SHIP'S GOING INTO A SPIN...


AS THE SPACE SHIP LURCHES, STAR LEAPS TO THE CONTROLS - EQUALIZES THE PRESSURE CAUSED BY THE GAPING HOLE - AND BRINGS THE CRIPPLED SHIP DOWN TO A SAFE LANDING. BUT LATER, AS HE AND BLACKY FOLLOW THE HELMET MAP...
THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, BLACKY. DID YOU TAKE THAT SPECIAL PELLET I GAVE YOU?
YEAH, AN' ME HEAD'S BUZZING LIKE A TURBINE. HEY, LOOK, THAT OLD SPACER HULK MUST BE THE ENTRANCE!
SPACE SHIP JUNK YARD
SOON, INSIDE THE HULK...
SNAP ON THAT WRIST BAND I GAVE YOU, AND STICK OUTSIDE BY THE JETMOBILE. I'M GOING DOWN THOSE STAIRS.
AS STAR START'S DOWN
HMM...STRANGE LAYOUT - WHAT?
I - I'M LOOKING FOR A SPACER PART HEARD I COULD GET IT HERE...
SPACER PARTS HERE? OH, YES - COME ON DOWN.
BETTER SIGNAL SANDRA.
IN ANOTHER ROOM...
AUTHO'S SIGNAL. THERE, I'VE SWITCHED ON THE VIDEO, SANDRA.
NOT A BAD SPECIMEN, BUT BETTER SIZE HIM, WHILE I LOOK AROUND UPSTAIRS. HE MAY HAVE AN AIDE.
AND ABOVE IN THE JETMOBILE...
THERE, I'VE SWITCHED ON STAR'S SPECIAL VIDEO - WHAT? THOSE CREEPS BEHIND HIM, GOING TO GRAB HIM!
SO, HE WAS RIGHT? LOOKS LIKE A SHANGHAI RACKET. I BETTER GET OUT OF HERE, FAST - AND GIVE HIM A HAND - BUT SOMEONES BEHIND ME!
AN ELECTRO WHIP! I -
GET HIM, MEN! BRING HIM BELOW TO THE CELL!

MEANWHILE...
AH, IN TIME! MY ANTI-GRAV BOOTS SAVED ME! WAIT— THEY'RE NOT HUMANS... THEY MOVE TOO STIFFLY!
AND JUST TO PROVE MY STATEMENT— THERE!
SUDDENLY, BLAST-SKIN, SEARED BY THE HEAT-BLAST, MELTS — EXPOSING A FACE OF METAL. A ROBOT!
BUT...
PRETTY CLEVER ARTICLE! HE'S WISE TO MY ROBOTS— THEY'VE NEVER FAILED YET TO TRANSFIX A SPACE MAN FOR ME BUT THE VACO-TUBE WILL FIX HIM.
AS...
WHAT! BEING DRAWN INTO THIS TUBE! CAN'T STOP IT...
DOWN THE DARK SHAFT PLUNGES STAR PIRATE, BRAIN REELING, ALERTING HIMSELF FOR THE NEW HORROR HE MUST FACE...
BLACKY! HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE?
STAR! YOU WERE RIGHT! THIS PLACE IS A SHANGHAI TRAP! THE DAME'S GONNA PUT US IN WITH THE SPACE MEN TO BE PROCESSED!


LATER, SANDRA GREETS HER BIGGEST CUSTOMER...
MORE MEN, RASGA - SO SOON? YOU MUST BE RICH BY NOW WITH ALL THAT ATOMITE AND BLYSOLD YOU'RE HAULING FROM DEEP SPACE.
NOT RICH, SANDRA - THE MEN YOU SELL ME DON'T LAST LONG ENOUGH. THOSE WHIRLPOOLS AND HIGH PRESSURES KILL THEM OFF TOO QUICKLY.
I MUST HAVE MORE, MEN IMMEDIATELY. CAN YOU SUPPLY THEM? THE USUAL TEN THOUSAND CREDITS...
YES. BUT YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL, RASGA - ONE ALREADY ESCAPED ON YOU - AND MY ROBOTS HAD TO GO RECAPTURE HIM. BUT COME...
BZZZT! PROCESS ROOM READY. BZZZT!
SOON.
SORRY ABOUT THAT FELLOW ESCAPING - COULDN'T BE HELPED. HMM. COME LAYOUT IS THAT THE PROCESSING TUBE?
YES. THEIR BODY PRESSURES ARE BEING EQUALIZED TO THAT OF DEEP SPACE. THEY'VE BEEN IN LONG ENOUGH.
ATTENTION, GUARDS. START RELEASING PRESSURE TO 1Y INTENSITY AND OPEN THE COUPLING VALVES...
WHILE INSIDE THE TUBE...
ULP! WOTTA PORCE!
SHH Y'SAP. THE WAIST BAND'S ELECTRO MAGNETIC MAKE UP. MANUNE NOW, DEPRESS THE SECOND BUTTON.
ENOUGH, GUARD. SWITCH ON THE GRAPPLE RAY AND BRING THEM OUT. GET THE HELMET WELDING EQUIPMENT READY, AND WATCH THOSE LAST GUYS WE SNATCHED! THEY MIGHT TRY TO ESCAPE.
BAM! ONLY ONE GUY'S EVER ESCAPED FROM THE WELDED HELMET COLLARS. LET'S GO.

VERY CLEVER, SANDRA — SINCE WE DISCOVERED ROBOTS WERE USELESS FOR THIS JOB, YOU'VE WORKED UP TO A NICE RACKET. HERE'S THE CREDITS...
THE ROBOTS COME IN HANDY AS DECOYS TO LURE PROSPECTS HERE. BUT THOSE HELMETS PUT THESE MEN UNDER YOUR CONTROL COMPLETELY!
THERE, THE WELDING'S FINISHED, SANDRA.
GOOD START. THE CONTRACTO BEAM, AND KEEP YOUR EYE ON THOSE LAST TWO GUYS. WE SHANGHAIED THEY'RE ACTING A LITTLE TOO NORMAL.
PSST, BLACKY... WE CAN TALK BECAUSE THERE'S A SMALL RADIO IN THE WAIST BAND. BREAK THE CONTACT, NOW!
GOOD! NOW DEPRESS THE THIRD BUTTON — IONIC FORCE WILL CRACK THE COLLAR WELD! HURRY!
SUDDENLY...
I KNEW IT — A TRICK! THE ONE WHO ESCAPED RASCA MUST HAVE BEEN PICKED UP BY THESE TWO. THEY CAME PREPARED...
SHE'S WISE TO US, BLACKY — LOOK OUT, THE ELECTRO WHIP!
AH! BOOTS GOT ME OUT OF THE WAY JUST IN TIME! WAIT — THE BUYER... GOING TO BLAST BLACKY — DOESN'T SEE ME...
STARTLED HIM! NOW TO GET HIS BLASTER — THE OTHERS ARE CLOSING IN!
HELP!

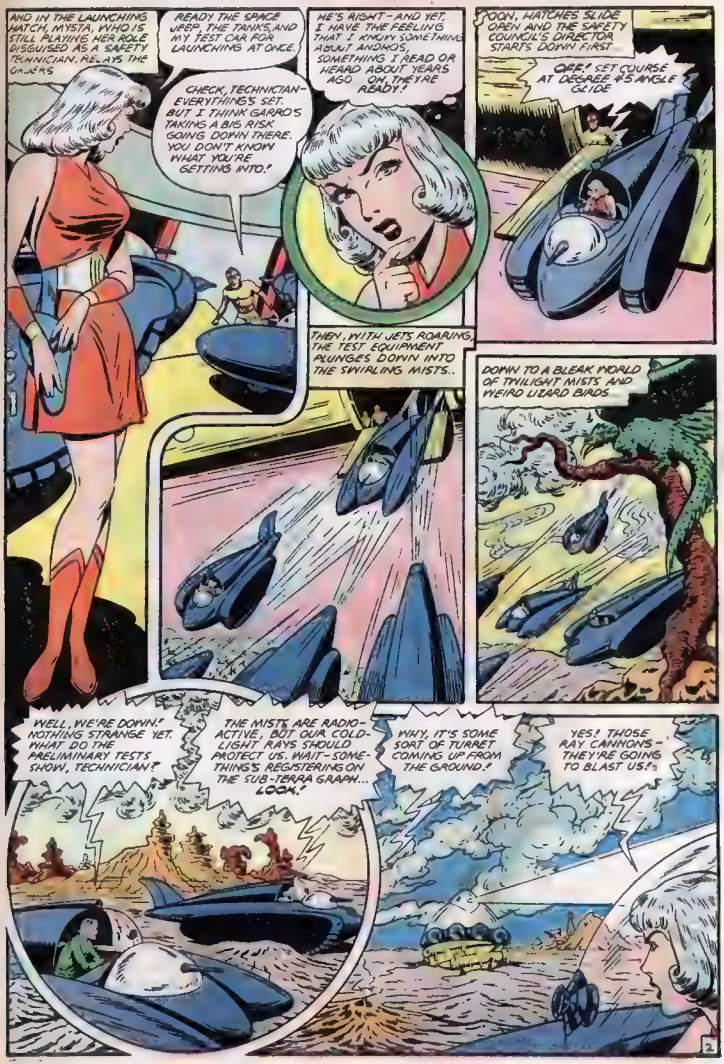

THERE! THIS FORCE RAY OUGHT TO HOLD YOU FOR A SPELL!
WOW, WHILE YOU TWO UNTANGLE, I'LL SWITCH ON ONE OF YOUR PLAY TOYS!
THE GRAPPLE RAY—GOT IT ADJUSTED. I WANT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS!
GOOD! DUMPED 'EM RIGHT INTO THAT PRESSURE TUBE! WHAT—SOMEONE BEHIND ME!
SUDDEN TWIST, A SWIFT GRAB AND THE LAST ONE IS FLOORED...
BUT STILL THE THUD OF FISTS CONTINUE...
TAKE THAT, AND THAT, AND THAT—DOG, RASCAL... I'LL MAKE YOU BEG FOR MERCY, I'LL...
STILL GROGGY, EH BLACKY? HOLD UP—I'M AFRAID YOUR KNUCKLES ARE GETTING THE WORST OF THIS!
LATER...
SO SHE HAD A NICE RACKET SHANGHAIING GUYS FOR DEEP SPACE, EH? AND WE'RE HEROES, SO WHAT? WHAT'D WE GET OUTTA THIS?
TEN THOUSAND CREDITS FOR CHARITY, PLUS THE REWARD!

STAR PIRATE IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

Life on other Worlds

THE MYSTERY PLANETS —
UNKNOWN, UNCHARTED, UNNAMED— FLOATING THROUGH AN ENDLESS VOID. WITHOUT QUESTION, A MENACE TO THE SPACE TRAVELER. BUT WHO CAN DREAM THE HAZARDS THEY HOLD FOR TOMORROW'S HARDY ADVENTURERS? THE ATMOSPHERE MAY PROVE TENABLE. AND HYDRA-HEADED HORRORS SMALL, PERHAPS, PROVE NON-EXISTENT, HAVING LONG SINCE VANISHED AS PREY TO A TERROR FAR WORSE.
CANNIBAL PLANTS — REPTILE-LIKE VEGETATION SLITHERING THROUGH CREVASSES IN THE LAVA CRUST TO CRUSH THE BONES AND FEAST ON UNWARY BEAST — OR MAN!
BUT PERIL TO SPACE TRAVEL MUST BE REMOVED, AND IN THE VOID-WILDERNESS, REFUELING STATIONS MUST BE FOUND. WHO CAN SAY WHAT FUTURE SCIENTIST SHALL DEVELOP THE RAY— MORE POWERFUL THAN ATO-BLASTER OR DIS-GUN— TO WIPE OUT THIS SOULLESS STRANGLER?

MYSTA
OF THE moon
By
ROSS GALLUN
• ENCYCLOPEDIA UNIVERSA •
ANDROS: DEAD WORLD CHARTED AS DESOLATE WASTE OF VOLCANIC UPHEAVALS, LAVA CRUSTS AND PETRIFIED FORESTS. DEVOID OF LIFE, SAVE FOR FLIGHTS OF GYRFALCON-BIRDS, THAT CIRCLE ENDLESSLY IN THE ETERNAL MISTS OF TWILIGHT.
THAT WAS HOW THE ENCYCLOPEDIA LISTED THIS DISTANT WORLD. BUT WHY — WHY DID THOSE CONSTANT REPORTS OF STRANGE ENERGY IMPULSES KEEP POURING IN SO PERSISTENTLY THAT FINALLY A RELUCTANT AND SKEPTICAL DIRK GARRO SUMMONED HIS SAFETY COUNCIL...
AND SOON, AS THEIR GREAT LABORATORY SPACE SHIP HOVERS OVER THE TINY PLANET...
THE ATMOSPHERE IS A MASS OF SWIRLING MISTS — WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LAND IN THAT FOG. NOTIFY DIRECTOR GARRO OVER THE ANNUNCIATOR.
AS, IN THE CONTROL QUARTERS...
NAVIGATION QUARTERS TO DIRECTOR GARRO... WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO LAND ON ANDROS DUE TO HEAVY MISTS!
YES, YES, I'VE KNOWN THAT, AND I'VE PREPARED FOR IT. DIRK GARRO TO LAUNCHING HATCH: HAVE OUR EQUIPMENT READIED FOR DESCENT, TECHNICIAN!


AND IN THE LAUNCHING HATCH, MYSTA, WHO IS STILL PLAYING HER ROLE DISGUISED AS A SAFETY TECHNICIAN, RELAYS THE ORDERS
READY THE SPACE JEEP, THE TANKS, AND MY TEST CAR FOR LAUNCHING AT ONCE.
CHECK, TECHNICIAN- EVERYTHING'S SET. BUT I THINK GARRO'S TAKING A BIG RISK GOING DOWN THERE. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING INTO.
HE'S RIGHT - AND YET, I HAVE THE FEELING THAT I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT ANDROS SOMETHING I READ OR HEARD ABOUT YEARS AGO. OH, THEY'RE READY.
SOON, HATCHES SLIDE OPEN AND THE SAFETY COUNCIL'S DIRECTOR STARTS DOWN FIRST.
ORE, I SET COURSE AT DEGREE #5 ANGLE GLIDE
THEN, WITH JETS ROARING, THE TEST EQUIPMENT PLUNGES DOWN INTO THE SWIRLING MISTS..
DOWN TO A BLEAK WORLD OF TWILIGHT MISTS AND WEIRD LIZARD BIRDS.
WELL, WE'RE DOWN! NOTHING STRANGE YET. WHAT DO THE PRELIMINARY TESTS SHOW, TECHNICIAN?
THE MISTS ARE RADIO-ACTIVE, BUT OUR COLD-LIGHT RAYS SHOULD PROTECT US. WAIT - SOMETHING'S REGISTERING ON THE SUB-TERRA GRAPH... LOOK!
WHY, IT'S SOME SORT OF TURRET COMING UP FROM THE GROUND!
YES! THOSE RAY CANNONS - THEY'RE GOING TO BLAST US!
2

...HEN, AS FORCE BOLTS DART AND SLITHER IN THE GLOOM, OTHER TURRETS APPEAR...
ONE OF OUR TANKS SMASHED. IF I CAN GET OUT OF RANGE...
...UT...
OH! ONE OF THE RAYS CAUGHT ME! I--I'M FALLING...
ONLY STUNNED ME FOR A MOMENT. GOOD THING I MANAGED TO GET SOME DISTANCE AWAY. THE WRECKAGE OF MY CAR HIDES ME. WHAT'S THAT?
SUDDENLY, HATCHES CLANG OPEN, AND STRANGELY GARBED FIGURES POUR OUT...
...ARRO'S MEN BATTLE VALIANTLY, BUT SOON...
GREAT ZEUS! SURROUNDED BY AN UNDERGROUND HORDE! WE'RE BEATEN! SURRENDER, MEN—IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!
...S...
GOOD! THEY HAVEN'T SEEN ME. I'LL GET AWAY... WHAT?
ZAHEEE! STRUGGLE NOT—ESCAPE IS IMPOSSIBLE!
OH!

I'LL NEVER PULL FREE OF THIS BIG BRUTE! ONE CHANCE - MY BLASTER!
ZAAAA!
THERE, THAT PARA-RAY WILL HOLD YOU UNTIL I CAN SEE WHAT YOU ARE!
SWIFTLY, A VISION COMES TO MYSTA'S MIND, A VISION OF SOMETHING ONLY HALF REMEMBERED..
SWIFTLY, MYSTA BENDS OVER THE FALLEN GIANT, REMOVES HIS HELMET AND...
WHAT? WHY, HE'S JUST A BAG OF BONES UNDERNEATH!
HE'S A SUB-TERRA MAN! MUST BE A WHOLE CITY OF THEM BELOW. I'LL PUT ON HIS HELMET AND SUIT, THEN GO DOWN!
SECONDS LATER, MYSTA, IN THE DISGUISE OF A SUB-TERRA, DESCENDS THE HATCH STAIRS...
I RECALL VAGUE MEMORIES OF THIS PLACE. BUT HOW DID THEY GET HERE? WHY?
THOSE WALLS! MURALS ON THEM — THEY SEEM TO TELL A STORY!
4

ALONE IN THE LONG DARK HALL, MYSTA STARES AT THE STRANGE MURALS WHICH TELL A TERRIFYING TALE ABOUT HOW THE SUB-TERRA PEOPLE FIRST SOUGHT REFUGE UNDERNEATH THE SURFACE OF ANDROS...

IN THE YEAR 1999, ANDROS, A PLANET OF FLOURISHING CITIES AND FARMS AND COUNTRY TOWNS, WAS STRICKEN BY AN UNKNOWN DISASTER...

ITS PEOPLE FLED IN TERROR TO THE COUNTRYSIDE, TO THE REFUGE OF A GIANT BOREK CONTROLLED BY THE SUB-TERRA PEOPLE...

A REPRESENTATIVE HAD TO PLEAD WITH, AND AGREE TO THE DEMANDS OF THE UNDER PEOPLE'S RULERS — THE SLEEPERS, HAD TO AGREE TO ENDLESS TOIL IN THE SUB-TERRAN JUNGLES...

WHEN ALL AGREEMENTS WERE SETTLED, THE GIANT BORER STARTED ON ITS DOWNWARD JOURNEY...

DOWN, DOWN AWAY FROM THE DISASTER THAT WAS DESTROYING ANDROS INTO SUB-TERRAN CRUSTS...

AND ANDROS ITSELF — ON THE SURFACE — BECAME A DEAD PLANET TO THE UNIVERSE...

SO THAT'S IT! GENERATION AFTER GENERATION YOUNG IN THOSE UNDER JUNGLES MADE DRASTIC CHANGES IN THEIR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE! BUT I MUST TRY AND LOCATE GARRO...

MEANWHILE, GARRO AND HIS MEN ARE BROUGHT BEFORE THE SUB-TERRA RULERS – THE SLEEPERS.
OUR JOURNEY TO THE SURFACE WAS NOT IN VAIN, O SLEEPER. BEHOLD, THESE CAPTIVES OF ANOTHER WORLD!
AYE! THEY CAME TO SEEK US OUT, SOLDIER – TO DESTROY US.
BUT NO – NO! WE CAME ONLY TO FIND OUT ABOUT SOME MYSTERIOUS IMPULSE! FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN REMEMBER, ANDROS HAS BEEN A DEAD PLANET! WE NEVER DREAMED –
SILENCE! THE SLEEPER PRONOUNCES YOUR FATE!
OVER THESE MANY EONS', THE RANKS OF OUR TOILERS IN THE JUNGLES HAVE THINNED. 'TIS THERE THAT I SENTENCE THESE INTRUDERS. TAKE THEM AWAY TO THE PROCESSING CHAMBERS!
AT THAT MOMENT...
THIS DOOR OPENS, BUT WHAT LIES BEYOND IT?
SLOWLY, THE HEAVY PORTAL SWINGS BACK, AND MYSTA STARES AMAZED...
AN UNDERGROUND JUNGLE. THOSE WORKERS – THEY'RE GATHERING FOOD,' THAT'S STRANGE.' HOW CAN THEY CULTIVATE PLANTS DOWN HERE! I MUST GO IN...
WAIT – THAT RAY... THEY FORCE GROWTH UNDER A SPECIAL LIGHT. THEY'RE TALKING – I MUST LISTEN!
ZAN! THOSE CAPTURED OUTLANDERS HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO TOIL HERE IN THE JUNGLES!
AYE, I HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT – AND EVEN NOW THEY ARE BEING PROCESSED!
UNBEARABLE HEAT FORCES MYSTA TO REMOVE THE SURFACE SUIT, AND THE TALK GOES ON...
AND ONCE THEY'VE BEEN PROCESSED, THEY CAN LIVE NO OTHER PLACE BUT HERE!
THAT MEANS I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING – AND DO IT FAST!

MEANWHILE, AT THE PROCESSING CHAMBERS...
HOLD, OUTLANDER, YOUR TURN COMES NEXT. THERE IS ROOM FOR ONLY ONE GROUP AT A TIME.
GREAT SCOTT! MY MEN—THEY'RE UNDERGOING A PROCESS SO THEY CAN LIVE DOWN HERE! I'LL BE NEXT—AND THERE'S NO ESCAPE!
AS, IN ANOTHER SECTION OF THE HUGE METAL WORM...
HELLO! WHAT'S THIS? A SPINDLE MAN ON GUARD! MUST BE SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
WHO GOES THERE?
THERE'S NO TIME FOR FOOLISH QUESTIONS! HERE, I'LL TAKE THAT RAY RIFLE...
STOP! YOU CANNOT ENTER HERE. THIS IS THE BORER CONTROL ROOM—STOP—STOP! THE SLEEPERS WILL BE ANGERED!
SORRY—BUT THAT CONTROL ROOM IS JUST THE THING I'M LOOKING FOR! THERE, THIS FORCE BOLT WILL HOLD YOU!
WHEN, INSIDE THE CONTROL ROOM—MYSTA SLAMS THE HATCH DOOR SHUT...
THAT HORN—SOUNDS CRACKLING FROM IT! BUT I MUST GET TO THE CONTROL LEVER...
AND AS MYSTA PUSHES THE OLD AND RUSTED LEVER, FRANTIC VOICES ISSUE FROM THE HORN...
STOP! DO NOT TOUCH THE CONTROLS! WE CANNOT LIVE AT THE SURFACE!
I CAN'T LISTEN TO THEM! GARRO AND HIS MEN MUST BE SAVED. I ONLY HOPE I'M NOT TOO LATE!
7

MEANWHILE, GARRO AND HIS FEW REMAINING MEN ARE ABOUT TO ENTER THE PROCESSING CHAMBERS, WHEN SUDDENLY...
WHAT! THE FLOOR'S MOVING! THE WHOLE ROOM IS LURCHING! SAIL INTO THESE GUYS WHILE WE HAVE THE CHANCE, MEN!
JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME, GARRO! WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE HAPPENED?
ONE OF OUR PARTY GOT INTO THE CONTROL ROOM! C'MON, WE'VE GOT TO FIND AND HELP WHOEVER IT IS!
SOON, THE GREAT BORER NOSES TO THE SURFACE...
AND IN THE CONTROL CHAMBER...
THANK HEAVENS! YOU STARTED THIS THING JUST IN TIME. BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!
I MANAGED TO KEEP HIDDEN BEHIND MY OVERTURNED CAR. BUT COME, WE'VE GOT TO SIGNAL THE SHIP. WE'RE NOT SAFE YET.
BUT AS MYSTA, GARRO AND THE FEW REMAINING MEN START ACROSS THE WASTED LAND...
STOP! SOMEONE'S COMING OVER THE RISE. IT MAY BE... WAIT! IT'S GARRO AND OUR SAFETY MEN! PICK THEM UP!
LOOK! THOSE CARS—THEY'RE FROM OUR SHIP!
YES! THEY SENT OUT A SEARCH PARTY! WE'RE SAVED!
SOON ALL HANDS ARE SAFE ABOARD THE SPACE SHIP...
WELL, TECHNICIAN, WE'RE HOMEWARD BOUND—THANKS TO YOU FOR SAVING US FROM THOSE DEVILS!
DEVILS? NO, THEY'RE NOT BAD PEOPLE, DIRECTOR GARRO. I BELIEVE THEY COULD BE EDUCATED TO OUR WAYS IN TIME. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THEM, SIR?
HMM...SOMEONE SUGGESTED THAT MYSTA OF THE MOON HANDLE THAT PROBLEM. AND YOU KNOW, I THINK SHE'S JUST THE PERSON TO DO IT!
THANK YOU... I AGAIN—A WISE DECISION, DIRECTOR. I'M SURE MYSTA WILL MAKE THOSE PEOPLE AN ASSET TO THE UNIVERSE!

MYSTA OF THE MOON IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!!

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Monogram Initialed KEY HOLDER *Pliable Plastic*

Flashlight has **red plastic reflector** for use as a warning signal

We GUARANTEE that you can't duplicate this sensational value for less money anywhere in America today!

Here without a doubt is the greatest merchandise bargain you'll be likely to see for years to come. Only our tremendous purchasing power and large volume "direct-to-you" method of distribution makes such a value possible. Shop around and see for yourself. Where else today can you get: *(1) A beautiful Zipper Billfold with Built-in Pass Case and Change Purse. (2) A new type precision made Ball Point Pen. (3) A handy Plastiflex Key Holder monogrammed with your choice Initial. (4) A Pencil-Type Pocket Flashlight complete with batteries* . . . . . **4 big Values in ALL for ONE LOW PRICE of $1.98. You might ordinarily expect to pay that price for a billfold or a flashlight, either or both, if bought separately at today's prices.**

When you see these highly useful articles and examine their many outstanding features as described, you'll agree that we are giving you a value you won't be able to duplicate for a long time. Don't delay taking advantage of this big money-saving offer. You get so much value for such a trifling low cost. The limited supply on hand is sure to sell out fast so it will be first come, first served. SEND NO MONEY! Just mail the handy order coupon below on our 10-day money-back guarantee offer.

SEND NO MONEY! *Rush This Order Coupon!*

ILLINOIS MERCHANDISE MART, Dept.5758
1227 Loyola Ave., Chicago 26, Ill.

Gentlemen: Rush me the 4 Big Values as shown C.O.D. for only $1.98 plus 15c tax and few cents postage charges. I must be delighted in every way with all 4 articles (Billfold, Flashlight, Pen and Key Holder) also satisfied that I have made a real saving or I can return my purchase within 10 days for full refund.

Give the one INITIAL wanted on Key Holder

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE ____ STATE ____

☐ To save shipping charges I enclose $1.98 plus 15c tax in advance (total $2.13). Ship my order, as indicated, all postage charges prepaid.

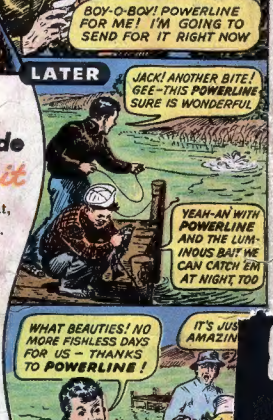
FISHERMEN Amazing New Invention Helps CATCH MORE FISH!

GOSH—HE'S BEEN HERE ONLY 2 DAYS AND CAUGHT MORE FISH THAN WE HAVE IN 2 WEEKS!
RIGHT—LET'S ASK HIM HIS SECRET
IT'S NO SECRET, FELLAS...THE ANSWER IS POWERLINE...WITH POWERLINE YOUR BAIT ACTUALLY SWIMS TO BULRUSHES AND OTHER HARD-TO-FISH PLACES WHERE THE "BIG ONES" HIDE!
BOY-O-BOY! POWERLINE FOR ME! I'M GOING TO SEND FOR IT RIGHT NOW

Use Powerline and fish even at night where the big ones hide

No Boat - No Reel - No Special Bait

It's now easy to fish as far as 100 FEET from shore! No boat, no reel, no special bait necessary. POWERLINE does all the work. It hooks the "big ones"! Use any bait. Easy to use. No shadow scare, noiseless. You have complete control of line at all times. "Tease." Move back and forward. POWERLINE goes where you want it . . . in weeds, bull-rushes, under trees. No fuss, no bother, no tangles. You can't miss with POWERLINE. Introductory offer includes amazing new POWERLINE with full instructions plus Fishing Guide Booklet. If you order NOW.


LATER
JACK! ANOTHER BITE! GEE—THIS POWERLINE SURE IS WONDERFUL
YEAH—AN' WITH POWERLINE AND THE LUMINOUS BAIT WE CAN CATCH 'EM AT NIGHT, TOO
WHAT BEAUTIES! NO MORE FISHLESS DAYS FOR US — THANKS TO POWERLINE!
IT'S JUS AMAZIN
SOME SPORT!

Extra BONUS If You Write Today!

If you order NOW, we will include at no additional cost an 84 Foot Cutty Hunk Type Line and Luminous Float. Yes, the same high-test Cutty Hunk Type Line used by fishermen all over the country. The Luminous Float clearly flashes signals at night.

Now Only $1.98 Complete

SEND NO MONEY

Test for 10 Days at Our Risk...

Just mail coupon. Amazing new POWERLINE with full instructions plus 84 feet of Cutty Hunk Type Line and Luminous Float will be sent on approval. On arrival pay postman only $1.98 plus C.O.D. postage. Use for 10 days. If not completely satisfied return and money back. Limited Supply. Cash orders sent prepaid. Order TODAY!

POWERLINE TACKLE SALES CO.
Dept. TA-1512, **Grand Rapids 2, Michigan**

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

POWERLINE TACKLE SALES COMPANY, Dept. TA-1512
Grand Rapids 2, Michigan

Rush me my POWERLINE complete with instructions plus Fishing Guide Booklet. Also send my Cutty Hunk Type Line and Luminous Float, at no extra cost, for prompt action. I will pay postman on arrival $1.98 plus C.O.D. postage. If I am not completely satisfied after 10 days I can return and get money back. (Send cash and POWERLINE pays postage.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ *Zone* _____ *State* _____